

SUNDAY SCHOOL JOURNAL

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

NEW SERIES.

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The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice.

This society, now in the twelfth year of its existence, has, in common with similar societies in different parts of the country, done much to suppress the agencies which are at work to corrupt the young. Since its organization it has succeeded in convicting over five hundred persons who were engaged in making or selling evil literature, or in gambling of various kinds. The books, pictures, stereotype plates, etc., used in the hellish trade, and confiscated by the work of the society, had a total weight of over thirty-four tons, besides which over eight tons of gambling utensils were destroyed.

The sale of sensational-story papers, which have done much to corrupt the youth of the land, has been materially reduced. The New York Legislature last year enacted a law prohibiting the sale to minor children of any periodical "principally made up of criminal news, police reports, or accounts of criminal deeds, or pictures and stories of deeds of bloodshed, lust, or crime." We wish that similar laws might be enacted in every State of the Union. These trashy publications prepare the minds of the young for something worse, and there are those who are vile enough to furnish this something worse, as the work of this society shows.

We dare not publish some of the facts which have been brought to our notice in connection with this subject. The evils sought to be suppressed are all the more to be dreaded because they cannot be described in the public prints. They are insidiously working destruction to the souls and bodies of the young, and it has been conclusively shown that even the sanctity of Christian homes and of Sunday-schools has in some cases been invaded. Parents and teachers should be on the watch lest evil literature should be stealthily introduced side by side with the Holy Scriptures.

The courageous secretary of this society, Mr. Anthony Comstock, deserves great praise for his noble efforts to further its objects. In spite of attempts to bribe, and of threats to kill, and of personal assault, evidenced by a scar he will carry through life, he toils on with unflinching courage, the object of the perpetual hate of the vile men and women whose trade he seeks to ruin, and we trust of the prayers of all good people.

A Tribute to the C. L. S. C.

A MEMBER of the C. L. S. C. writes: "My life until twenty-seven years had past was spent as a scholar and then as a teacher; I have always enjoyed study. But four years ago I married. In three years had two children. There was nothing for me at home but babies and housework, and both, I am sorry to say, were but a drudgery to me. I had no time for books; was tired all the time; and a good housekeeper tried to make me believe that the sooner I gave up sighing for the privilege of study the better it would be for me. But the C. L. S. C. local circle began to meet a few doors from me, and a good member gave me advice saying that my desire to study was all right. I could be a better mother and wife by doing so. I asked my father to sit with my children while I attended the circle. My whole life seems brighter. It is not all drudgery now. I can keep house better. I have something to talk about when I meet old friends who are studying, and my old independence has come back to me: Mother is a wonder to me. Her education was very limited. She has always felt that a great deal she might have enjoyed has been denied her. Now that her two children are married, and she is alone, the C. L. S. C. studies fill a great need, and her health being poor, we are glad to see her happy with her books."

A Patriotic Month.

THIS month, with its Fourth, ought to grow among other things a crop of patriotism. Let it be an intelligent patriotism. Let it appreciate the fact that our country has had—and will have—a marvelous growth. It has been increasing like a river; now it seems to be spreading out like a sea. Let us realize also that evil is increasing. It would send its poison-streams down into this sea and corrupt all its waters. The only power that can prevent this work of death is the Church of Christ, one vast fountain sending out influences clean, pure, holy. O how magnificent is your privilege, teacher, in the Sunday-school, to do something toward this work of saving unto God this nation of the nations. But don't be appalled by the magnitude of the work. You are not asked to do a work whose measurement shall be that of the nation's size. Do something for Christ and your country just where you are. Mass your impulses in one steady, definite effort. Concentrate work on an individual. Educate some one boy or girl into the Christian patriot. Send out one pure stream, at least, into this great, imperial life of the nation. If a stream become streams, one become ten, so much the better, but realizing the need, do something.

After Revival.

THE REV. A. H. GUNNETT, pastor Methodist Episcopal Church, Shelbyville, Ill., has been working up a scheme for holding and helping the young people. During a recent revival meeting there were one hundred and twenty-five added to the Church, and in practical response to the question, How can we best instruct and help them? Brother Gunnett says:

"In addition to our regular devotional meetings, I settled upon three things:

"1. I requested them to begin reading the Bible, reporting to me every Sabbath at Sunday-school how much they had read during the week. One girl reported: 'I read twenty-five chapters in Genesis this week.' For seven weeks the aggregate of each week has been more than one thousand chapters. These reports are entered in our "Bible-reading Register." All ages and sizes are reading—parents, children, and grandchildren, in the same family.

"2. I organized a class of sixty who are reading the 'Spare-Minute Course.' Each member pays five cents, and is entitled to read all the books in each course. We have a register for this, and the books are given out by number.

"3. The new members are organized into classes according to age, and a leader or teacher appointed for each class. This meeting is held on Friday evening. The first half-hour is given to devotional exercises, after which classes take their places as in Sunday-school, where they are taught our Church

usages and doctrines, disciplinary rules, etc. This plan was intended for the new members, but the older members saw its value, and are taking their places in the classes, and are as much interested as the younger.

"It is our aim to put into the hands of every member tract No. 27, of the Selected Series: 'Articles of Religion and General Rules,' etc.

"In addition to this we have three classes of children organized according to the plan of the Discipline. Every thing works like a charm."

The above scheme is most worthy of commendation and imitation, and if the classes on that glorious Friday evening meeting (and we have seen nothing that pleases us better for a long time) should take up the "Oxford League" series for their studies, we could pronounce the Shelbyville method perfect.

An Oxford League in Iowa.

THE Cedar Falls Methodist Episcopal Church, under the pastoral charge of the Rev. SAMUEL W. HEALD, secretary of the Upper Iowa Conference, has organized an "Oxford League," and sends us a sample certificate, such as are issued to members or share-holders. Single shares sell at fifty cents. Twenty-five dollars constitutes a life membership. A single share (fifty cents) entitles the holder to the privileges of the "League." "With the money," says our correspondent, "we design to purchase such books and tracts as we need in our courses of study. We concluded that it would be best to issue a neat certificate, as it would give our society a character among young people. It has been the hardest work to get our league-work running, but at last we are succeeding grandly."

Let us have an "Oxford League" in every Church in Methodism!

Methodism in the Lessons of the Third Quarter.

BY D. A. WHEDON, D.D.

THE free human action narrated in Lesson I is easily reconciled with the divine sovereignty in punishing Solomon. It only required that God should not interpose to prevent the follies and passions of men. Rehoboam's haughtiness and Jereboam's ambition needed only to be let alone. They freely acted as God, indeed, foreknew they would act, while they were equally free to the opposite action instead. The foreknowledge necessitated nothing. Thus Methodism has always taught.

God's providence is shown in Lesson IV, both in the withholding of rain and in the feeding of Elijah, two widely differing events. His superintendence over the affairs of the world is perfect and universal, and minute as well, extending to even the fall of the sparrow. This, however, does not imply that he orders and causes every thing that occurs, for he would then be the author of sin, which is

as revolting as it is impossible. In the world of nature he rules by laws which he established and executes. Rain was withheld in accordance with the laws of rain, the unseen spring of which he knows how to touch. The feeding of the prophet was pure miracle. And why may not the Governor of the universe, if he sees fit, teach the raven to do his bidding, and by his power multiply the meal and oil, as Jesus, later, fed the thousands? Let us not turn God out of his world. In moral things he has precluded himself from using compulsion by creating man free, which freedom force would destroy. Yet even there he maintains his superintendence by his law, his truth, his Spirit, bringing good out of evil, and holding the wrong-doer responsible.

Lessons VI and VII bring up the prayer test. The Christian world was summoned a few years since, in a plan devised by a skeptic, to a test of the question whether God answers prayer. Its great defect was that it omitted to ask if God consented to it, for his servants are authorized to pledge him only so far as he has promised. The test in the lesson was devised by himself; and verse 37 shows that the prophet in proposing it acted by his direction. The prayer of Elijah was under his immediate influence, and was therefore sure of an answer. This is proof that it was his will to grant the request. So any prayer for temporal things, the healing of the sick, for instance, if inspired by the Holy Spirit, is sure of success, but if not thus inspired, and offered as only our desire, it must be in submission to the better judgment of God. If it is denied, as in the case of St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, abundant grace to endure is given.

One of Fletcher's two Methodist axioms is, "All our damnation is of ourselves." The sinner's self-sale to evil is illustrated in Lesson IX. To effect salvation is God's work. To counteract the tendency to sin, with which every man is born, he supplies grace through the atonement. Only by resistance to that grace can one run into ruin, and then the downward progress is rapid. When evil is chosen instead of good, the soul delivers itself over to captivity to Satan, whose rule never relaxes until the ruin is complete. God causes none to sin, but always tries to save from sin. So sinners destroy themselves.

Lesson X carries us into the heavenly world. Death is our name for that event in which soul and body become separated. Elijah did not die. So his body was not shuffled off or disintegrated, as some suppose, for that would be death, not translation. Evidently, the power which at the last day will make immortal and incorruptible the bodies of those then living wrought those effects on him. Besides, Elijah, in that immortal body, was afterward seen, with the disembodied spirit of Moses, in conversation with Jesus, both conscious and intelligent. Methodists rightly hold, then, to a future state, the soul's continued existence and intelligence, and the immortality, by the resurrection, of the body that dies.

That God answers prayer all Methodism teaches

—absolutely for what is promised, conditionally in what is not; that is, if God sees it wise and best. The Shunammite's dead son was raised in answer to prayer. If God should see adequate reason, as he did then, he could do the same now; and if the occasion for such a miracle should arise we can trust him to raise up and send the Elisha to pray.



Opening and Closing Services for Third Quarter of 1885.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. THE DOXOLOGY.
- III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. *Psa.* 78. 1.

SCHOOL. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. *Deut.* 32. 2.

SUPT. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. *Deut.* 30. 11, 14.

SCHOOL. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. *Psa.* 119. 18.

SUPT. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. *John* 5. 39.

SCHOOL. But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. *John* 20. 31.

IV. SINGING.

V. PRAYER.

LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.
- II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.
- III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, OUTLINE, AND DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION, by the school in concert.
- IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON, by Pastor or Superintendent.
- V. THE SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.*
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. *Ecc.* 12. 13.

SCHOOL. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. *Phil.* 4. 8.

III. DISMISSION.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

* Special Lessons in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE KINGS.

B. C. 975.]

LESSON I. REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES.

[July 5.]

1 Kings 12. 6-17. [Commit to memory verses 6-8.]



be thy servants forever.

8 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him :

9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter ?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us ; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke : my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

12 So Jer'o-bo'am and all the people came to Re'ho-bo'am the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him ;

14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke : my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people ; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by A hi'jah the Shi'lo-nite unto Jer'o-bo'am the son of Ne'bat.

16 So when all Is'ra-el saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in Da'vid ? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jes'se ; to your tents, O Is'ra-el : now see to thine own house, Da'vid. So Is'ra-el departed unto their tents.

17 But *as* for the children of Is'ra-el which dwelt in the cities of Ju'dah, Re'ho-bo'am reigned over them.

General Statement

The son of Solomon was compelled to confront impending ruin before the crown had rested upon his brow. The empire won by the sword of David was composed of different nationalities, never welded into unity, and all ripe for revolt, with able leaders in Shechem, in Damascus, and in Edom, ready to lift the banner of revolution. The twelve tribes were disaffected toward the throne on account of the heavy exactions of Solomon, the general pressure of the times, the luxury of the nobles, and the poverty of the common people. The disloyal elements found a leader in Jeroboam the son of Nebat, a man of great ability and equally unscrupulous. The young king was compelled to come to Shechem, the very nest of treason, to redress the grievances of the people before he should receive the crown. They presented their demands, mainly just, though perhaps peremptory in manner, and the young king asked for three days in which to consider them. He first called together the old statesmen who had strengthened the throne of his father, and asked their advice. With one voice they counseled modera-

tion, gentleness toward the people, and a promise of reform. This would bind his subjects to his throne, and make him king over their hearts. But young Rehoboam was bent on another course, dismissed these wise advisers, and summoned the youths who had been his companions in the palace to give their opinion. Ignorant of the true condition of affairs, and arrogant by their education, they bade him meet petition with threat, speak stern words to the people, and put down rebellion with a strong hand. The counsel was in accord with his own feelings, and he followed it promptly in word, but failed to act with vigor. Had he either granted the demands of the people on one hand, or instantly seized the leaders of rebellion on the other, the throne might have stood securely. But with bold words and weak acts, the hour was lost ; the empire of Solomon was rent into fragments, a rival throne arose almost within sight of the temple, and the opportunity for Israel to become the controlling power of the East forever passed away.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 6. King Rehoboam. The only son of Solomon named in the history, and inheritor of all his father's folly, but none of his wisdom. He is spoken of as forty-one years old at this time, but there is some reason to suppose the figures a copyist's error for twenty-one. Brought up in a harem, and utterly unacquainted with public life until the crown was placed upon him, it is not remarkable that he made serious mistakes which led to sad results. **Consulted.** Concerning the demands of the people for reform in the government. **The old men.** The old statesmen trained under David, and experienced in public affairs, were the fitting counselors for the untried young king. Some of their names are given in 1 Kings 4. 2-6. **How do ye advise ?** His first conduct, in asking their advice, was good ; and had he followed it, he might have stood in history as a worthy successor of his wise father. **Answer this people.** They had demanded some relief from the heavy burdens of taxation imposed by King Solomon. It is evident that the luxury and prodigality of his reign had brought on a financial crisis, or "hard times ;" from which the common people were suffering, as high prices bring poverty, where there is not sufficient work and corresponding wages for all.

7. They spake. Their counsel showed that they apprehended the temper of the people, and the reasonableness of their demands. **If thou wilt be a servant.** They did not recommend him to be a weakling, or a nominal king ; but to obtain the good-will of his subjects by seeking their interests and to lead them, while he seemed to follow. (1) *The true master of the people is the one who serves them.* **Speak good words.** That is, kind words, the soft answer that turns away wrath. *They will be thy servants.* A

few kind words from the king might have foiled the plots of the disloyal, and brought the twelve tribes back to their allegiance. How different "might have been" the history ! With Israel united the conquests of David might have been held, the rising power of Assyria held in check, or even subverted, the house of David might have been dominant over all western Asia, and a pure religion might have taken the place of the ancient forms of idolatry. (2) *Fidelity to God and gentleness to men give power.*

8, 9. He forsook the counsel. Because it was not in accord with his kingly humor, which was bent on despotism. **Consulted with the young men.** They were his equals in age, and his associates in life ; so that it was natural that he should incline toward them. But they possessed neither knowledge nor experience in public affairs ; they had been brought up in the seclusion of the palace, and were without sympathy for the hard-pressed people, for they had never felt their burdens. They were like the nobles of France under Louis XV. who said, "Let the deluge come—after us." **What counsel give ye ?** (3) *People are very apt to ask advice which will suit their own inclinations.*

10. The young men. The whole realm could not furnish more foolish counselors than these youths, yet theirs was the counsel which found favor. **Thy father made our yoke heavy.** The magnificent court of Solomon, his extensive buildings, and the luxury which he introduced, drained the treasury, and compelled heavy taxes. The poor were oppressed, and on his death clamored for relief. **Make thou it lighter.** By a less expensive government, and a return to the constitution of Samuel, which recognized the privileges

of the people as well as the prerogatives of the king. **My little finger shall be thicker.** He was recommended to meet the petition with a threat; to repress the growing disaffection by violent measures; and to make greater exactions than his father. History repeats itself, and we see the same plan pursued in the Russian empire of to-day.

11. I will add to your yoke. In the view of these young nobles, the people were slaves to be held in bondage, and not citizens to be governed. **I will chastise you with scorpions.** This expression probably does not point to any form of chastisement, but is a figure of speech referring to harsh treatment.

12. Jeroboam. He was the leader of the people in the demand for reform, and afterward became the first king of the ten tribes. He belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, which was always jealous of the supremacy of Judah. In the reign of Solomon he conspired against the king, and was compelled to flee into Egypt. Here he remained secretly plotting, until the death of Solomon, when he returned to Israel. He was a thorough demagogue, using the cause of reform for the advancement of his own interests. **The third day.** The young king had asked for three days in which to consider the people's demand. (4) *It is well to take time for thought, but it is better to use it wisely.*

13, 14. Answered the people roughly. Hebrew, *hardly*, that is, in an imperious, despotic manner. How different from the manner of his grandfather David, who "bowed the heart of all" the people, and won them by his gentle words! (5) *Nothing is ever lost, and often much is gained, by a kind and courteous manner.* **Forsook the old men's counsel.** He determined upon a course of bravado and threatening, when he had no power to carry it out; since, after all, he was entirely dependent upon the people, for there was no standing army to compel obedience to his behests. **I will add to your yoke.** The mistake of Rehoboam was that of Saul, and also of Solomon, in trying to rule "like the kings of the nations around," as an absolute monarch, and not as the representative of God, whose will was to be interpreted by the prophets. (6) *It is never safe for God's people to copy after the customs of the world.*

15. The cause was from the Lord. It is not meant that God ordered the dissolution of the kingdom, and the breaking up of Solomon's empire, but that in these events, wrought out by human passion, ambition, and selfishness—in which Rehoboam, Jeroboam, and the people all were guilty—God overruled for the accomplishment of his own spiritual purposes. He had fore-

seen the result, and provided for it, and predicted it by the mouth of his prophet. He did not make Jeroboam ambitious, nor Rehoboam tyrannical, but he ordained that through their acts his purpose of salvation should not be thwarted, but promoted. (7) *How fortunate for the world that an almighty hand and an omniscient eye directs it!* **By Ahijah the Shilonite.** This was a prophet, living at Shiloh, the ancient home of the tabernacle. He had foretold to Solomon the sundering of his kingdom, and to Jeroboam his coming royalty. Afterward he gave other predictions, less pleasant to Jeroboam, and wrote a history of Solomon's reign. See 1 Kings chaps. 11 and 14, and 2 Chron. 9, 29.

16. When all Israel. Here, as in many other places, "all Israel" means the ten tribes, as distinguished from Judah and Benjamin. We can trace this separation of interests at least as early as the reign of Saul (1 Sam. 18, 16), who was perhaps chosen as the result of a compromise between the two great tribes. David tried in vain to harmonize the tribal relations, and almost lost his throne in the attempt, for Absalom's rebellion arose on the side of Judah, and Sheba's on the side of Israel. Solomon eradicated boundary lines in his rule, but could not break down the old tribal feeling, a "state rights" sentiment, which finally severed the kingdom. **What portion have we in David?** The motto of rebellion sixty years before (2 Sam. 20, 1) was again the cry of the people. It meant, "We have no interest in the family of David." **The son of Jesse.** The name by which David was often referred to. **To your tents, O Israel.** A popular war-cry, dating back to the time when the tribes were encamped in the wilderness. **See to thine house, David.** As the founder of the dynasty of his descendants, David is invoked in a tone of contempt to care for the interests of his house. **Israel departed to their tents.** The assembly broke up, and the representatives departed to their several homes among the tribes, not only without giving pledges of allegiance to the new king, but to organize insurrection against him.

17. The children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah. This is generally supposed to refer to such families of the ten tribes as had settled within the tribe limits of Judah, especially to the Simeonites, whose territory had been taken out of Judah on the south, and who, from their close connection with that tribe, and their separation from the other tribes, were compelled to submit to Rehoboam. Other families had come to Judah to be near the temple, and doubtless these also remained loyal.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Revolt of the ten tribes. 1 Kings 12, 6-17.
Tu. The revolt predicted. 1 Kings 11, 11-33.
W. The revolt of Sheba. 2 Sam. 20, 1-13.
Th. Abner's revolt. 2 Sam. 3, 6-21.
F. An undutiful son. 2 Sam. 15, 7-14.
S. The only true adviser. Ps. 118, 1-12.
S. The result of evil doing. Prov. 13, 1-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise:
 but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. Prov. 13, 20.

LESSON HYMN. C. P. M.

Hymnal, No. 571

Be it my only wisdom here,
 To serve the Lord with filial fear,
 With loving gratitude:
 Superior sense may I display,
 By shunning every evil way,
 And walking in the good.
 O may I still from sin depart;
 A wise and understanding heart,
 Jesus, to me be given;
 And let me through thy Spirit know
 To glorify my God below,
 And find my way to heaven.

TIME.—B. C. 975.

PLACE.—Shechem, in Central Palestine.

RULERS.—Rehoboam, son of Solomon, King of Judah (B. C. 975-958); Jeroboam, son of Nebat, King of Israel (B. C. 975-954); Shishak, or Sesonchis, King of Egypt; Rezon, King of Syria of Damascus.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's overruling power.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. The Old Men's Counsel,** v. 6, 7.
 Of whom did the king ask advice?
 Concerning what action was the advice asked?
 What counsel did they give?
- 2. The Young Men's Counsel,** v. 8-11.
 Who were these young men?
 What did they advise?
 Why did the king prefer their counsel?
- 3. The King's Decision,** v. 12-15.
 What was the king's answer to Israel?
 In what spirit was it given?
- 4. The People's Answer,** v. 16, 17.
 What did Israel answer the king?
 Of what prophecy was this a fulfillment?
 Who remained loyal to Rehoboam?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. The power of the law of kindness?
2. The folly of trusting rash counselors?
3. That some mistakes are irremediable?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Old Men's Counsel,** v. 6, 7.
 Whose counsel did Rehoboam first seek?
 What did he ask?
 What advice was given him?
 What will gentle words do? Prov. 15, 1.
- 2. The Young Men's Counsel,** v. 8-11.
 What regard had the king for the counsel of the elders?
 Whom did he then consult?
 What had the people asked of the king?
 What did the young men advise?
 Whose counsel showed the better spirit?

- 3. The King's Decision, v. 12-15.**
 Who came for the king's decision?
 After how long a time?
 How were they received?
 Whose counsel was taken?
 What reply was made?
 Whose plans was the king fulfilling?
- 4. The People's Answer, v. 16, 17.**
 What answer did the people make?
 Whither did they go?
 Who remained faithful to Rehoboam?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That kind dealing insures friendship?
2. That a foolish heart rejects wise counsel?
3. That the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

When King Solomon died who took his place? **His son Rehoboam.**

As the people were about to crown him, what did they ask him to do? **Make their burdens lighter than Solomon had done.**

What would they promise if Rehoboam would do this? **To obey him always.**

What answer did he make? **"Come again in three days and I will tell you."**

What did the old and wise men counsel him? **To speak kindly and tell them he would not be hard in his rule.**

What did the young noblemen who had grown up with him say to do? **Tell them you will not do as they ask.**

Which advice did he take? **That of the young princes.** [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

When the people came again, what did he tell them? **"My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it."**

What more did he say? **"He beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions."**

This made them so angry, what did they answer back? **"We care nothing for you, if you are David's grandson."**

What did ten of the tribes do? **Left his rule and set up a kingdom of their own.**

What was it called? **The kingdom of the Ten Tribes, or of Israel.**

Who was their king? **Jeroboam.**

Who stayed with Rehoboam? **The tribe of Judah and a part of the tribe of Benjamin.**

What name was given to them? **The kingdom of Judah.**

Words with Little People.

Sometimes a little companion wants you to do wrong and he tells you "how nice you are," and, "it won't do any harm just this once." Look out! Some of the boys and girls at school copy from your slate, or get high marks in some unfair way. Look out! You know some little boy who says bad words, or some little girl that says unkind things of another little girl. Look out! May be you know some little boy who goes off for a "good time," instead of going to Sunday-school. Look out for all of them. They are those who are meant in the GOLDEN TEXT. A companion of *such* shall be destroyed.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Whom did Rehoboam succeed as king of Israel? **His father, Solomon.**
2. What did the people ask Rehoboam to do? **Make their burdens lighter.**
3. What answer did Rehoboam give? **"I will add to your yoke."**
4. How did the people receive this answer? **Ten tribes revolted.**
5. Whom did the ten tribes afterward place over them as king? **Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....
 Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Foolish King.

I. THE WISE COUNSELORS.

1. *Consulted with the old men.* v. 6.
 "With the ancient is wisdom." Job 12. 12.
2. *Be a servant unto this people.* v. 7.
 "Chiefest....servant of all." Mark 10. 44.
3. *Speak good words to them.* v. 7.
 "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Prov. 15. 1.

II. THE FOOLISH COMPANIONS.

1. *Forsook the....old men.* v. 8.
 "Thy father's friend forsake not." Prov. 27. 10.
2. *Consulted with the young men.* v. 8.
 "Childhood and youth are vanity." Eccl. 11. 10.
3. *Thus shalt thou speak.* v. 10.
 "A fool's mouth is his destruction." Prov. 18. 7.

III. THE KING'S ANSWER.

1. *Answered the people roughly.* v. 13.
 "A froward man soweth strife." Prov. 16. 28.
2. *I will add to your yoke.* v. 14.
 "Also a great oppressor." Prov. 28. 16.
3. *Will chastise you with scorpions.* v. 14.
 "A fool's mouth....calleth for strokes." Prov. 18. 6.

IV. THE KING'S LOSS.

1. *The people answered the king.* v. 16.
 "Troubleth his own....inherit....wind." Prov. 11. 29.
2. *What portion have we in David?* v. 16.
 "Soon angry, dealeth foolishly." Prov. 14. 17.
3. *See to thine house, David.* v. 16.
 "House of the wicked....overthrown." Prov. 14. 11.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from Rehoboam.

1. Every young man is a king, the inheritor of a throne, in mental power, in possibilities of his life, and in his influence upon others.
2. Every young man comes to his kingdom to face dangers. He finds that the mistakes of the past generation bring forth results of evil; that there are serious questions of life for him to face, and temptations for him to overcome.
3. The wise youth will seek to profit by the experience of those who have lived before him, and will seek counsel from age and experience. Even men who have lived foolish lives, in sin and pleasure, are apt to give the young advice not to follow their errors; and rarely will old age counsel folly.
4. That youth is foolish who seeks his counselors among his own companions, young men like himself, without experience, and the mere echoes of his own opinion.
5. Young men need a sympathy with the people, the insight into their needs, the power to feel with them, so that they may be able to lift them up.
6. Young men should be courteous and gentle; for an imperious manner has led others, as well as Rehoboam, to ruin, and a kind spirit has helped to win and hold empire over the hearts of men.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

A FEW years ago there were two or three large and destructive fires in the neighborhood in which I am staying. Some fine tracts of moorland were ravaged by the flames, presenting afterward, instead of the beauty for which they had been celebrated, a

withered, scorched, and blackened appearance. In some cases outhouses were destroyed, and the fire approached dangerously near to several inhabited dwellings. One pretty chine leading down to the sea was traversed from end to end with the flames, which burned up trees, gorse, heather, and grass. What was the cause of this damage? The dry weather and the wind intensified and carried on the flames, the luxuriant vegetation fed them. But how did they begin? Some one had spread paraffine on the ground at a certain point, and had then set it on fire. But what was the reason for such a deed? It was evidently done out of ill-will. What could have aroused such ill-will? Some prohibition of the landlords against the unrestricted gathering of sticks was believed to be the cause. And further it might be asked, what induced the landlords to issue such a prohibition; but this I am unable to answer. Often in a catastrophe the course may be traced back step by step, and the farther and closer it is traced, the greater probability is there that such a thing may be guarded against in the future.

In our lesson for to-day we have the account of a terrible catastrophe, the rending asunder of a kingdom. Look at Israel in the time of Solomon, sending out her "boughs unto the sea and her branches unto the river" (Psalm 80. 11), her king reigning from Euphrates "unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt;" all the kings of the nations round about bringing their yearly tribute to him; Judah and Israel, "as the sand which is by the sea for multitude," eating and drinking and making merry, dwelling "safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree" (chap. 4. 20-25), enjoying peace and plenty at home, and admiration and respect abroad. And in a few short hours this glorious kingdom was rent in two, its strength and its splendor gone.

What was the cause of this catastrophe? First, the death of King Solomon, who had, but for the sin that marred the conclusion of his reign, ruled wisely and well. But there was no difficulty about the succession. By divine command the throne belonged to the house of David, and Rehoboam had no rival in his own family, as had been the case with Solomon at his accession. We must look further.

On his accession, Rehoboam met the heads of the people at Shechem, the chief city of Ephraim. This very circumstance shows the existence of something wrong, for they had gone to Hebron to make David king (2 Sam. 5. 1), while Solomon had been crowned at Jerusalem. The change was ominous, and shows that the ten tribes were determined to stand on their rights. In the time of David there had been a feeling of jealousy between them and their brethren of Judah (2 Sam. 19. 41-20. 1), and the burdens imposed upon them by Solomon (chap. 5. 13) had made them forget the peace and plenty they enjoyed under him. Yet their dissatisfaction might have been appeased, and we must look yet further for the cause of the catastrophe.

Look at the third verse. Their spokesman was one who was an enemy to the house of David.

Chap. 11. 26, etc. No doubt Jeroboam encouraged them in the demands they made to the king, and in their determination to brook no refusal. Yet had a conciliatory reply been made to their request, the evil day might at least have been put off.

But the reply was not conciliatory. Rehoboam received timely advice from the counselors of his father. Yet he cast it on one side, and his answer was haughty, scornful, and brutal. It was like the spark to the fuel, and out of it arose at once the flame of rebellion.

Why did he give such an answer? It was put in his mouth by the young men whom he consulted. But what induced him to follow such utterly foolish and wicked advice? These young men had "grown up with him." They were the associates of his boyhood and youth; and from the unhesitating and imperious way in which their counsel was given we may judge that they had obtained great ascendancy over him. Little did he think, as he gradually gave himself over to this companionship and influence, that it would cost him the larger part of his kingdom, and the destruction of the empire erected by his father and grandfather.

True it is that God permitted this catastrophe. Instead of averting it Jehovah allowed the evil which had shown itself first in Solomon (chap. 11. 1, etc.), and then in Solomon's son, to bear its proper fruit. But that did not make it less evil, nor Rehoboam less guilty. And, strange to say, Solomon, speaking by inspiration, had already predicted the consequences of bad company, as we learn from our Golden Text. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

And the consequences are just as sure now as they were in the days of Rehoboam. Many a sad catastrophe in the life of an individual, in the history of a family, may be traced down to bad company. That fascinating companion may drag a girl down to misery. That smart and clever acquaintance may turn a boy into a felon. Where shall protection be found from such perils? In the company of the wise; but the only sure safety is found in walking with Him who was wiser and greater than Solomon, who took our nature upon him that he might be our Saviour and our safeguard through life, and our guide to his own kingdom of glory.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON, M.D., D.D.

The Revolt of the Ten Tribes. 1 Kings 12. 6-17.

1. The value and authority of the Old Testament, upon whose study we again enter, according to absolutely competent and trustworthy criticism. Isa. 9. 6; John 16. 30; 2 Cor. 12. 1; Matt. 4. 4; Mark 12. 10; John 7. 42; Luke 24. 47; 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17; Prov. 6. 23; 1 Pet. 4. 11; 2 Pet. 1. 19; Heb. 3. 7.

2. It would be well in this connection to form at least a partial biblical acquaintance with the leaders of the fratricidal strife precipitated by the event forming this lesson—Rehoboam and Jeroboam. 1 Kings 12; 14. 21-31; 2 Chron. 10-12; 13. 7; 9. 31; 1 Kings 11. 28, 29; 12. 20, 26; 13. 14, 7, 19; 2 Chron. 10. 13.

3. Shechem, the place of the national gathering to confirm the new king, and to protest against grievous burdens of governmental imposition. (a) First mentioned, Gen. 12. 6; 33. 18, 19; 35. 4; (b) Jacob's purchase was near, Gen. 48. 22; Josh. 24. 32; (c) City of refuge, Josh. 20. 7; 21. 21; (d) A place of political rendezvous for the tribes, Josh. 24. 1, 25; Judges 9; (e) Here was Jacob's well, John 4. 5; Acts 7. 16; (f) Valley of, Deut. 27. 11-14; Judges 9. 7.

4. Old age, though not a stranger to weakness, has duties divinely imposed upon it, and is to be highly honored, vers. 6, 7. Eccl. 12; Psa. 90. 10; Titus 2. 2; Lev. 19. 32; Job 32. 6; Prov. 23. 22; 1 Tim. 5. 1; 1 Pet. 5. 5; Prov. 16. 31; 17. 6; 20. 29.

5. God, being no respecter of persons, was as ready to give wisdom to Rehoboam in this emergency as to Solomon in 1 Kings 3. 12; 4. 29. Gen. 41. 33, 38; Dan. 1. 17; 5. 14; 2 Pet. 3. 15; 1 Chron. 22. 12; 2 Chron. 1. 9, 10; Prov. 2. 3; James 1. 5; 1 Kings 3. 9; Eccl. 12. 11; Job 28. 28.

6. Rehoboam's stupid sin, to commit which he was advised by the rash impetuosity of official criminal youth, and yet for which he alone was responsible, was stubbornness, ver. 13. Neh. 9. 16, 29; Jer. 7. 24; 2 Kings 17. 14; 1 Sam. 8. 19; Zech. 7. 11; 2 Chron. 36. 13; Prov. 7. 11; 2 Pet. 2. 10; Isa. 42. 24; Psa. 78. 10; Deut. 31. 27.

7. The claim of Jeroboam in behalf of disaffected Israel was intrinsically right, and if Rehoboam had practically regarded it he would have shown both wisdom and art. Psa. 11. 7; Gen. 18. 25; Isa. 51. 1; Job 29. 14; 1 Kings 3. 6; Prov. 11. 5; 13. 6; 15. 1; Isa. 32. 17; Deut. 1. 16; 2 Sam. 22. 3; Ezek. 45. 9; Jer. 22. 15.

8. The cruelty of the official young men, and Rehoboam's valueless and impolitic folly, are both well explained by a study of the unrenewed hearts that governed them. Prov. 4. 23; 6. 16, 18; 12. 8; Eccl. 8. 11; 9. 3; Jer. 4. 14; 17. 9; Isa. 44. 20; Ezek. 3. 7; Mark 10. 5; Prov. 18. 12; Psa. 101. 4; 2 Chron. 26. 16.

9. Rehoboam, with an unequaled chance for continuous power and popularity, lost it, not only by criminal stubbornness, but because he was what God calls a fool. Titus 3. 3; Prov. 1. 7; 12. 15; 14. 16; 18. 6; 3. 35; 10. 8, 14; 26. 11; 27. 22; 28. 26; 15. 2; Jer. 4. 22; Matt. 23. 17, 19; Eccl. 10. 14; 7. 9; 10. 12.

10. The God of providence was in this needless revolution to overrule it to his glory, ver. 15. Prov. 16. 9; 19. 21; 21. 1; Gen. 50. 20; Phil. 1. 12; Exod. 3. 7, 8; Deut. 2. 30; 2 Sam. 24. 1; 1 Chron. 5. 26; Psa. 145. 17; Dan. 4. 37; Isa. 63. 13.

Lessons:

1. An illustration of the divine plan of visiting the sins of the father upon the sinning son.

2. The magnificence of the king means the impoverishment of his subjects. The material glory of the one involves the material degradation of the masses.

3. The pre-eminence of Solomon's criminal court was purchased at the price of universal serfdom.

4. Not only soldiers but laborers were by this proud monarch unsparingly conscripted. 1 Kings 5. 13, 14.

5. Rehoboam being "young and tender-hearted" (2 Chron. 13. 7), aged 21, not 41, should have consulted and obeyed God, and not official old men, or officious young men.

6. If kings were not fools they would do right; then their subjects would be happy, and their own crowns secure.

7. If Israel had submitted to such an inhuman conclusion against them, there might have been a degree of propriety in calling them God's "sheep," but none whatever in calling them his people.

8. Hell in the heart, the absolute dominion of the devil there, is the only sufficient explanation of such horrid inhumanity, vers. 13, 14.

9. Some provocations are more than divine manhood can or will endure.

10. Many men are to-day ruled by more monstrous masters than Rehoboam.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Begin by drawing a rough map of Solomon's empire, from the Red Sea to the Euphrates. Then show the space occupied by the twelve tribes, and indicate the location of Jerusalem and Shechem....Bring out by questions the story of the lesson, and by lines on the map show how Solomon's empire was destroyed, and Israel divided....The Thoughts for Young People show one method of presenting the truths of the lesson, having for its central idea the *youth as a king*. What is his kingdom? What should be his aims? Whom should he choose as advisers? How should he treat others? How should he act toward his enemies?...A more textual treatment is suggested by the Analytical and Biblical Outline. If it be followed, let the texts be searched and read by members of the class....For analogies to the times of Rehoboam, see the history of England under Charles I., of France under Louis XVI., and of Russia at the present day.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. Here is a divided kingdom. The entering wedge is the folly of Rehoboam. He was not wise-hearted, and did not seek wisdom from God. After reviewing the points of the lesson, call the attention of the school to the evil effects of bad companionship. A man is known by the company he keeps. "Birds of a feather flock together."

DIRECTIONS. Draw the crown with yellow chalk in outline. Make the wedge with red.

Another illustration may be made by drawing a wheel, such as is used in steering a ship, and by writing the following words:

REHOBAM AT THE WHEEL.
REJECTED WISE [WHEEL] STEERED BY
COUNSEL, FALSE LIGHTS.
Weak and willful, he thought wit was wisdom,
his folly divided the kingdom.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A conference with the new king, and grave old counselors are coming to it. Stately and slow, with gray heads and long gray beards, with faces thoughtful and far-seeing and kindly, they pass into the king's presence.

What will they say? Do they not bid him deal gently and tolerantly with the people? Watch the king's face, hesitating and quering what he shall do. Perhaps it softens and takes a kindly shade from the wise, gentle faces it looks into. Another conference, and who come now? Young men, swinging proudly their long robes, lifting faces of disdain, stepping forward as if kings to meet a king. What do they say? How shall Rehoboam treat the people? Ho, ho, they shake their heads, they give their black locks a haughty toss, and bid the king load on the people's necks a heavier yoke than Solomon's, and whip them with scorpions. Watch the king's face now. It hardens with those hard faces, it scowls, it threatens. A third conference and "all the people" hurry before the king at once. Do you not pick out from the people that tall, shapely man, vigor in his steps, fire in his eyes, force in his words? If mischief need a leader he will step into a front place. It is Jeroboam. To his and the people's petition for a redress of grievances, what will the king say? Watch once more his face. It is insolent with a sneer and cruel in its menace. A volcano is in his words. O the lasting consequences of one imprudent, violent speech! All the faces before him roughen and darken like the sea at the touch of the night-wind. An angry cry goes up from the multitude. It is the cry of defiance, of rebellion. The conference breaks up. The people suddenly scatter. David's kingdom is rent, and who can ever mend the rupture? Could the young men do it, they who tossed their heads in pride and cried, "Make of the scorpion a whip-lash for the people's back?"

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Folly of Pride.*

INTRODUCTORY. Open the Old Testament, and tell that we are going back now to that history. Ask a few questions about David and Solomon, and recall the story of Solomon's idolatry, and the judgment that the Lord pronounced upon him for his sin. Now that Solomon was dead, Rehoboam, his son, became the king of Israel. To be taught: 1.) How a wise king will rule. 2.) How a foolish king will rule. 3.) The result of folly.

1. Pin a paper crown to the board. When Solomon died, the people said, "We have no king." What would they do first? Look around for one. Solomon had a son named Rehoboam, and he, chosen king, went to Shechem to be crowned. People came there from all parts of Israel. Some said, "Rehoboam shall be our king if he will treat us more kindly than his father Solomon did, but if not, we will have another king." So they sent men to Shechem to ask him if he would take off some of their burdens. Talk about a wise king. Ask, Who is the great King? God. He has all power; he gives power to kings. If they love God, they will try to rule as he does. He is kind, just, patient, loving. So will a king be who feels that God puts the crown upon his head.

2. Make a great yellow sun on the board, by its side a little taper. Tell that compared with God the wisest and greatest king is as the taper compared with the great sun. Now, wouldn't it be a foolish little taper that would try to outshine the sun! But that is what a king does who tries to rule his people without trying to get help from God. A foolish king does not ask wisdom of God; he pleases himself first, not asking if God is pleased; he takes his own way, not looking for God's way. Tell the story of Rehoboam's treatment of the people, and ask if children think he was a wise king or not.



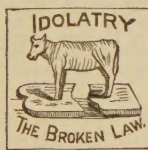
3. Make two roads meet—print on one, "God's way," on the other, "My way." Rehoboam came to such a place, where he had to choose. He chose his way. Tell the result of his choice. The kingdom that he threw away was an earthly kingdom. A heavenly kingdom is offered to each one of us who will take God's way, and deny self. What shall we find in God's way? The Bible, prayer, good companions, etc. In our own way, bad books, bad companions, worldly pleasures, etc. Teach that we cannot choose too young. God says, "Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve."

B. C. 970.]

LESSON II. IDOLATRY ESTABLISHED.

[July 12.]

1 Kings 12, 25-33. [Commit to memory verses 28-31.]



25 Then Jer'o-bo'am built Shechem in mount E'phra-im, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Pe-nu'el.

26 And Jer'o-bo'am said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of Da'vid:

27 If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Je'ru-sa'lem, then shall the heart of

this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Re'hobo'am king of Ju'dah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Re'hobo'am king of Ju'dah.

28 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Je'ru-sa'lem: behold thy gods, O Is-ra-el, which brought thee up out of the land of E'gypt.

29 And he set the one in Beth'-el, and the other put he in Dan.

30 And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, *even* unto Dan.

31 And he made a house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Le'vi.

32 And Jer'o-bo'am ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Ju'dah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Beth'-el, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Beth'-el the priests of the high places which he had made.

33 So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Beth'-el the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which he had devised of his own heart: and ordained a feast unto the children of Is-ra-el: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

General Statement.

Our last lesson presented Jeroboam in the aspect of the popular leader, chivalrous and bold, attacking old abuses, demanding for the people their just rights, the idol of the commons, and the friend of the pure and godly prophets. The goal of his ambition is now reached, and at once Jeroboam throws off his disguise, and reveals his true character—a self-centered, self-seeking, unprincipled politician. He sits upon the throne of Israel, master of ten out of the twelve tribes,

from the very borders of Jerusalem up to Mount Lebanon, and from the desert to the Great Sea. It is well for him to fortify his capital, and to establish an outpost on the wilderness-border. But with the eye of a politician, rather than a statesman, keen to see the outward aspects of the time, but blind to the deeper realities of moral and spiritual truth, he beholds peril rising in the distance, when his subjects shall enter the courts of the Lord's house as worshipers. He resolves to in-

stitute a religion of his own, and for his own kingdom, with outward emblems of worship to attract the eye; with two temples in his own realm, instead of one outside of it; with a priesthood of his own followers, attached to his throne, in place of the Levitical order, which was dangerous to himself in proportion as it was loyal to God; with forms of service in which he could participate, standing crowned and robed before his own

altar. The plan was crafty and wise in this world, but it left out of the account Almighty God, and it came to naught. As a result, a people were turned toward idolatry, and its resulting crimes; his own house came to a speedy ruin; his throne was possessed by a new dynasty, and his name stands pilloried in Scripture as "Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 25. Jeroboam. The first king of the ten tribes, a worldly-wise statesman, but careless of moral considerations, and with an outlook for the present life only. See notes on Lesson I, verse 12. **Built.** The city had been in existence since the times of the patriarchs, but he now fortified it and adorned it for his capital. **Shechem.** Now *Nablus*, situated in the center of Palestine, between the mountains Gerizim and Ebal. Here the law was read by Joshua, and the people pledged themselves to the service of God. **Mount Ephraim.** The section of the mountain region in the middle of the land, named from the powerful tribe which occupied the territory. **Went out from thence.** Still holding it as his capital, and making it the base of military and political operations. **Built Penuel.** The place of Jacob's wrestle with the angel. Gen. 32. 31. Jeroboam took possession of this place in order to control the region east of the Jordan, and the caravan-route between Egypt and the Euphrates. (1) *Jeroboam forgot what Jacob learned at Penuel, that the strength of man is in God.*"

26. Said in his heart. He reasoned with himself, but did not consult God, hence the horizon of his thought was narrow. **Now shall the kingdom return.** He could place no confidence in the people, for they might soon be as eager to dethrone him as they had been to crown him; and he did not know how to place confidence in God, though a sure house had been promised him if he would remain faithful to the true King of Israel. 2 Kings 11. 38. **To the house of David.** The name of David was still a power among the people. His achievements were recited, his psalms were sung, and he was the great national hero, with a name like Washington in America, or Napoleon in France. (2) *How weak is the king who cannot put his trust in God!* (3) *How unstable a foundation, is popular opinion!*

27. If this people go up to do sacrifice. The temple at Jerusalem was the center of the national religion, and three times in each year all the heads of families were called to celebrate the feasts around its altar. There were ties of race, of religion, of history, and of common interests binding the people together. **Then shall the heart of this people turn again.** There seemed just ground for this fear of a reaction in public sentiment; and Jeroboam's plan to prevent it was wise from the stand-point of worldly policy. But God had promised to keep him secure, and he could afford to trust, even in the face of danger. **They shall kill me.** His own death would be the inevitable accompaniment of a reunion; for he who takes part in a revolution does it with a rope about his neck. Only in recent Christian history, even, do we read of a change in government without the slaughter of vanquished leaders. (4) *Popular leaders must bear heavy burdens and take great risks.* (5) *In politics, as every-where else, it never pays to do evil that good may come.*

28. The king took council. Not with the Lord, nor with his prophets, but with the worldly, irreligious politicians of his own party. **Made two calves of gold.** He was indifferent to religion, except as it served his own selfish purposes; he was familiar with the forms of idolatry in Egypt, where he had lived in exile; and the worship of the golden calves was no new thing in Israel. From the fact of its popularity, we infer that it had been maintained in secret during all the history of the people. **It is too much for you.** He appeals to their love of ease, as well as to their need of worship. "You must have some religion; take the one which will require the least exertion." (6) *There are some nowadays who will join the Church which makes the least demand upon their conscience, their time, or their money. Behold thy gods.* It is suggestive of a previous acquaintance with this worship on the part of the people, to find that these were the very words spoken by Aaron

to the Israelites at Mount Sinai, when he made the golden calf. Exod. 32. 4. **Which brought thee up.** To the intelligent few, the image was merely a symbol of the invisible God; but to the ignorant mass of worshippers, it was the god, and regarded as divine. (7) *The golden calf, or gold in the place of God, has still many devotees.*

29. He set the one in Beth-el. A city ten miles north of Jerusalem, "the house of God," where Jacob saw the heavenly ladder, and where the prophets had a training-school. How the hearts of the faithful few must have sorrowed over its desecration! It was on the road to Jerusalem, thus intercepting the pilgrims on their journey to the temple. **The other put he in Dan.** Far in the north, at the foot of Mount Lebanon and the head of the river Jordan. Here there was already an idol-sanctuary, founded (strange to say) by the grandson of Moses! Its origin is related in Judges 17 and 18. The two calves were thus placed at the northern and southern boundaries of the kingdom, fit guardians for a realm whose aims were all of this world.

30. This thing became a sin. It chimed with the idolatrous tendencies of the people, and led them to rush headlong in a career of evil; for the worship of idols was constantly associated with revelry, debauchery, and vile immorality. See an example of this in the earlier worship of the golden calf in Exod. 32. 6. 25. **Before the one, even to Dan.** So eager were the people for the new worship, that they flocked in throngs even to the more distant shrine at Dan, which was farther from them than Beth-el, or than Jerusalem itself. (8) *So people who live too distant to attend church are near enough to go to the theater or the skating rink.*

31. Made a house of high places. The author of this book will not call the building a temple, or a house of God, but gives it a contemptuous name: as "high place," after the building of the temple, was only used of idol-shrines. **High places** were originally elevated sites chosen for altars, whether to God or idols, but the word became more and more associated with idolatry. This "house of high-places" was at Beth-el, and stood as a rival to the temple in Jerusalem. **Priests of the lowest.** Literally, "From the ends of the people," that is, out of all the tribes, and not from the tribe of Levi, which had been set apart for the priestly office. The reasons for this institution may have been that he wished to organize a priesthood out of his own partisans, and allied to his own interests, or that the Levites generally had refused to forsake the service of God for idols.

32. A feast in the eighth month. This took the place of the Feast of Tabernacles, which was held in the seventh month (September or October). The pretext for the change of time was that the harvest was a month later in the northern kingdom. **Like the feast that is in Judah.** This was the great autumnal festival, when the people from all parts of the land visited Jerusalem for a week, and slept in huts or booths. **He offered upon the altar.** He did this in person, like the heathen kings, for he was the head of Church as well as State in his dominion. The kings of Judah made their offerings through the priests. **So did he in Beth-el.** This city became a great center of idolatrous worship. See Amos 7. 13.

33. Which he had devised of his own heart. "He was placed in difficult circumstances, but he met them with the arts of a politician, not with the single-mindedness of a saint."—*Rawlinson.* (9) *See how sin gives birth to sin, and leads to a whole brood of evils.* (10) *How much harm a godless man in high places can work!*

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Idolatry established. 1 Kings 12. 25-33.
Tu. A change of kings. 1 Kings 12. 18-24.
W. The place of God's service. Deut. 12. 1-14.
Th. Idolatry forbidden. Deut. 5. 1-10.
F. The golden calf worshiped. Exod. 32. 1-10.
S. The feast instituted. Lev. 23. 33-44.
S. Punishment for sin. 1 Kings 13. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exod.

20. 3

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 33.

O God, our strength, to thee our song
 With grateful hearts we raise;
 To thee, and thee alone, belong
 All worship, love, and praise.
 And thou, O ever gracious Lord,
 Wilt keep thy promise still,
 If, meekly hearkening to thy word,
 We seek to do thy will.
 Led by the light thy grace imparts,
 Ne'er may we bow the knee
 To idols, which our wayward hearts
 Set up instead of thee.

TIME.—B. C. 970.

PLACES.—1. Shechem, in Central Palestine; 2. Penuel, on the brook Jabbok, in Eastern Palestine; 3. Dan, at the source of the Jordan; 4. Beer-sheba, on the southern border of Judah; 5. Beth-el, in the tribe of Benjamin; 6. Jerusalem, the capital of Judah.

RULERS.—See Lesson I.

CONNECTING LINK.—The tribe of Judah, under Rehoboam, undertook to make war upon Israel, but were forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah. 1 Kings 12. 21-24.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The one true God.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- Policy**, v. 25-27.
 What two cities did Jeroboam build?
 What did he fear that Israel would do?
 In what respect is shown his distrust of the Lord?
 What was his policy?
- Deceit**, v. 28.
 Of whom did the king take counsel?
 What false gods did he make?
 What was his pretense?
 Why did he select calves for idols?
 How did he induce the people to worship them?
- Idolatry**, v. 29-33.
 Where did he place the idols? and why?
 What was the result?
 Whom did he ordain priests?
 Why was this contrary to the law?
 What feast did he institute?
 Of what other sin was he guilty?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

- The evil of trusting to our own wisdom?
- The deceitfulness of sin?
- The power of a wicked man's influence?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- Policy**, v. 25-27.
 Who was Jeroboam? 1 Kings 11. 26.
 What was his character? 1 Kings 11. 28.
 What two cities did he build?
 Who had previously destroyed Shechem? Judges 9. 45.
 Where did Jeroboam live?
 Of what was he afraid?
 What would lead the people away?
 What would then be his fate?
- Deceit**, v. 28.
 What sin did Jeroboam commit?
 What plea did he make to the people?
 What falsehood did he utter?
 What does the wise man say of deceit? Prov. 12. 22.
- Idolatry**, v. 29-33.
 Where were the idols placed?
 Which one did the people first worship?
 What commandment did they break? Exod. 20. 4, 5.

What idol-service did Jeroboam establish?
 What feast did he ordain?
 What was done at Beth-el?
 At whose suggestion was this evil done?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

- That self-interest leads men into sin?
- That excuses for wrong-doing are easily found?
- That the evil heart is a bad counselor?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where did King Jeroboam make his home? In Shechem.

How did he strengthen his kingdom? He built walled cities and forts.

Where had the children of Israel worshiped? In the temple at Jerusalem.

Did Jeroboam want them to go to Jerusalem? No; he was afraid they would turn toward Rehoboam, and perhaps kill him.

After thinking it over, and talking with his wise men, what did he do? He made two golden idols in the form of calves.

What did he say to the people? "Behold the gods that brought you up out of Egypt."

What did he make them think? That it would be too much trouble for them to go to Jerusalem.

Where did he set up the idols for those who lived toward the north? At Dan.

Where for those who lived south? At Beth-el, on the road to Jerusalem.

What did he do for these idols? Built temples and made priests.

Did he follow God's commands in appointing the priests? No; he took them from any tribe, just as it happened.

Were they good men? They were very low and wicked.

When the people began to worship the idols, what commandment did they break? [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

Whom did God send to teach them the right way? His prophets; but they would not believe them.

Words with Little People.

"The Golden Text don't mean me this week, I know, for there are no idols near us!" Are you sure, dear little people? Let us see. *Any thing we love better than we love God draws us away from God, and any thing that does this is an idol. Do little people ever love their own dear selves so much that they do very many wrong things to please self, and so forget to love God best? Do they ever think more of their pretty clothes than they do of Jesus? Do they ever care so much for play that they do not want God's day to come? Do you see now that self, dress, and play might draw you away from God, and become an idol? There are many other things besides these that may be idols if we love them better than we love God. Read 1 John 5. 21. Watch, and give Jesus your whole heart.*

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

- What did Jeroboam fear should the people go up to sacrifice at Jerusalem? That they would return to Rehoboam.
- What did Jeroboam do to prevent their doing this? Made two calves of gold for worship.
- When he had done this, what did he say to the people? "Behold thy gods, O Israel."
- Where did he set these golden calves? One in Beth-el, and one in Dan.
- What did the people do? They worshiped them.

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Sins of Jeroboam.

I. WORLDLY AMBITION.

Built Shechem....built Penuel. v. 25.

"Woe unto them....house to house." Isa. 5. 8.

"Who is the greatest?" Matt. 18. 1.

II. DISTRUST OF GOD.

Now shall the kingdom return. v. 26, 27. .

"I will be with thee." 1 Kings 11. 38.

"Doth his promise fail." Psa. 77. 8.

III. WORLDLY POLICY.

The king took counsel. v. 28.

"Take counsel, but not of me." Isa. 30. 1.

"They walked in their own counsels." Psa. 81. 12.

IV. FALSEHOOD.

Behold thy gods, O Israel. v. 28.

"Workman made it . . . it is not God." Hosea 8. 6.

"Their idols are silver and gold." Psa. 115. 4.

V. IDOLATRY.

He offered upon the altar. v. 32.

"No other gods before me." Exod. 20. 3.

"They that make them . . . like unto them." Psa. 115. 8.

VI. EVIL INFLUENCE.

This thing became a sin. v. 30.

"Drive Israel from . . . the Lord." 2 Kings 17. 21.

"The way of Jeroboam." 1 Kings 16. 19.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Some Members of Jeroboam's Church.

1. Jeroboam has his followers to-day in men who think only of themselves, their own interests, their own plans; in men who use the cry of "reform" to obtain office; men who use the Church and religion to promote their own influence.

2. Jeroboam has his followers in those who distrust God, and seek to advance their cause by worldly policy which ignores moral questions. Not "Is it right?" but "Is it expedient?" is their motto.

3. Jeroboam has his followers in those who place gold in the stead of God, and live for material and worldly interests only. The golden calf has many devotees in this age, who for it will renounce comfort on earth, and the hope of heaven hereafter.

4. Jeroboam has his followers in those who seek ease rather than duty in their religious life. "It is too much" (ver. 28) is their plea; too much to go to Church; too much to work in the Sunday-school; too much to give to the Gospel. Their Church is "a chapel of ease."

5. Jeroboam has his followers in those who would have a man-made religion, instead of one divinely-given, for example, the Positivists worshipping a god of their own conception; the Agnostics, leaving out a personal God, but substituting "a Great Unknown."

6. After all, Jeroboam's most numerous followers are those who spell the name of their god with the letters S-E-L-F. They worship themselves, like the man who always said his prayers before his looking-glass.

English Teacher's Notes.

I KNEW a lady whom I will call A, who once rendered a great service to another, whom I will call B. At a considerable cost of labor to herself A filled the place of B as teacher for some time, until the latter was able to return to her duties. When B returned, she made a handsome present, not to A, but to another person who had given some slight assistance. Toward A she expressed no particular gratitude. Most people would call B's conduct not only ungrateful, but mean and unjust. This is a true case. Let me suppose another.

Suppose A had hired a servant to do a certain work for her, and B had hired none. Suppose that

day after day this servant was found busy, not on A's work, but on B's. Such conduct would be worse than unjust, it would be dishonest. Let me suppose one more.

Imagine a child, brought up by loving parents, with every provision made for the supply of his wants, for his advantage, and for his enjoyment. Suppose that such a child, instead of loving his parents, were to bestow his affections on some other people, who had no claim upon him, and who had done nothing for him. Would such conduct be unjust? Would it be dishonest? It would be worse, for it would be undutiful.

Yet there is something worse than this going on commonly day after day. There is One who is the Father, the Master, the Benefactor of men. And thousands on thousands are giving to others the gratitude, the service, the love, they owe to him alone. What is the proper word to apply to such conduct? It is idolatry.

But I remember some people in straitened circumstances who, having received much kindness from two ladies of good means, made a show of gratitude by sending them costly presents at Christmas. The ladies had no need of these things and they were much vexed. The senders had consulted their own pleasure in the matter, and gratified their pride, instead of seeking really to please their kind friends. This was sham gratitude. And there is such a thing as sham service; you may see a servant doing the work of the mistress who has hired her, after her own fashion, instead of following her mistress's directions. And there is sham affection and dutifulness, like that of the son in our Lord's parable, who said to his father, "I go, sir," and went not. Matt. 21. 28, 30. In all such cases the end to be attained is not the pleasure of the person to whom the offering is supposed to be made, but the pleasure of some other, or of self. Such sham worship offered to God is idolatry.

This was the sort of worship established in the kingdom of Israel after its disruption from Judah. Jeroboam, whom the people made king over them, knew that he had been destined by the Lord for this position, and that Divine providence had preserved and exalted him. Chap. 11. 31, 40; 12. 15. We should naturally expect to find him full of gratitude and of zeal for the service of God. But see what was the fact.

(1.) Here is an Israelite who wants to offer a sacrifice to God. He has sinned, and desires to confess his sin and have atonement made; or he has received some money and wants to offer a thank-offering. Lev. 6. 2-7; 7. 12, etc. By the law of God he must go up to Jerusalem with his offering. Deut. 12. 13, 14; 1 Chron. 21. 18; 22. 1. But the king's command is: No, Jerusalem is too far off; the sacrifice can be offered at Beth-el or at Dan.

(2.) At Jerusalem the worshiper would stand before the altar in front of the entrance to the holy place. And he knew that there, though hidden from his view, was the ark, the sign of God's presence, with the Shekinah, or cloud, resting on it.

What does he find when he comes to Beth-el? A golden calf set up for worship—set up to represent the majesty of Jehovah, of him who said: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness."

(3.) And who is to offer the sacrifice for him? The Lord had chosen the tribe of Levi for the service of the tabernacle, and out of it the family of Aaron for the work of the priest. Lev. 1. 5, etc., 2. 2, etc. But the Levites could not obey the king's decrees, and they have all gone off to the land of Judah. 2 Chron. 11. 13, 14. The priests at Beth-el are men chosen by Jeroboam, just any sort of people he pleased to appoint.

(4.) The time for the great feast of tabernacles draws nigh. People used to go up in happy companies to Jerusalem to keep the feast. But no one is stirring in the kingdom of Israel. Their feast will be kept the following month, and they will not have to cross the border.

Could such worship please God? It was not what he had chosen. It was in direct defiance to what he had chosen. It was in direct defiance to what he had commanded. Why was it thus offered? Because of the king's orders. The king was obeyed; Jehovah was disobeyed. This was idolatry. And why had Jeroboam given such orders? Because he feared for his kingdom and his safety. Vers. 26, 27. He thought of himself first, not of God. This was idolatry.

How is God to be worshiped now? (1.) In the name of Jesus. Phil. 2. 10; John 14. 13. (2.) "In spirit and in truth." John 4. 24; 1 Cor. 14. 15. (3.) In sincerity of life. Matt. 7. 21; James 4. 3, 8. But if our own pleasure and convenience, or that of others, is put first, that is idolatry. And all, even professing Christians, need the warnings of Paul and of John: "My dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." 1 Cor. 10. 14. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5. 21.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Idolatry Established. 1 Kings 12. 25-33.

After the revolt of the ten tribes Rehoboam, doubtful of the sincerity of their disaffection, sent his collector to secure the unusual tribute. (a) This official was stoned; (b) Rehoboam in great fear fled to Jerusalem; (c) Jeroboam was chosen king of the rebels; (d) Rehoboam raised 180,000 men to suppress this rebellion; (e) God, however, broke up his plan through one of his prophets.

1. The proper nouns, particular names, of this lesson. (a) Bethel, Gen. 12. 8; Judges 1. 23; Gen. 35. 1-15; Josh. 12. 9; Judges 20. 26; 1 Sam. 10. 3; 7. 16; Jer. 48. 13; Amos 3. 14; 2 Kings 23. 13; (b) Dan, Judges 18. 29; Amos 8. 14; Ezek. 27. 19; (c) Ephraim, Isa. 11. 13; Jer. 31. 6; 50. 19; (d) Jeroboam (see last lesson); (e) Levi, Gen. 29. 34; Exod. 6. 16-20; Gen. 34. 49. 5-7; Dent. 33. 8-11; (f) Penuel, Judges 8. 8-17; Gen. 32. 30; (g) Rehoboam (see last lesson); (h) Shechem (see last lesson); (i) Shishak, 1 Kings 11. 40; 14. 24, 26; 2 Chron. 12. 2-9; 1 Kings 3. 1.

2. How hard it was for Jeroboam, and how hard for the human heart in all ages, to so believe in God as to trust in his promises in extreme personal peril, ver. 27.

1 Kings 11. 29-38; Psa. 89. 3, 4; Heb. 10. 23; Jer. 33. 14; 1 Kings 8. 56; 1 Tim. 4. 8; Isa. 26. 4; Prov. 3. 5; 1 Sam. 17. 38, 39, 45; Psa. 62. 8; 20. 7; Hab. 2. 18.

3. God had graciously promised to favor Jeroboam on condition of faithfulness, and his powerful providence would have prevailed against every form of opposition, ver. 27. Isa. 14. 27; 46. 11; Mic. 4. 12; Num. 26. 65; Josh. 21. 45; Luke 21. 32, 33; Deut. 2. 30; 2 Kings 12. 15; Prov. 16. 33; 19. 21; 21. 30.

4. "Jeroboam said in his heart," his reflection had been profound, his conclusion was final; for "out of the heart are the issues of life," ver. 26. Prov. 4. 23; Matt. 15. 18, 19; 1 Kings 8. 61; Psa. 66. 18; Gen. 6. 5; Jer. 17. 9; Isa. 44. 20; John 13. 2; Ezek. 14. 3, 4; Dan. 5. 20.

5. God would reign without a rival in every heart. He is entitled to such supremacy. He made man for his dominion, and man needs his sovereignty. Nahum 1. 2; Isa. 43. 10; 44. 6; Deut. 13. 4; Eccl. 12. 13; Job 32. 8; 1 John 3. 23; Gen. 17. 1; Exod. 9. 14; 2 Sam. 7. 22; 1 Chron. 16. 29-31.

6. Perhaps the motive of Jeroboam in making the golden calves was pure. It may be he innocently sought to assist in true worship by the introduction of material symbols. In fact, however, his deed was real idolatry, vers. 28-30. Exod. 20. 3, 4; Deut. 5. 8; Isa. 44. 17; Dan. 3. 5, 10, 15; 1 Kings 6. 23; Ezek. 1. 10; Exod. 32. 4, 5; 1 Kings 22. 5, 6; Psa. 106. 19, 20.

7. Idolatry, which dishonors God and defiles man, is the substitution by the creature, as supreme in personal affection, of something else than the Creator. Deut. 8. 19; Hos. 3. 1; Ezek. 14. 3, 4; Col. 3. 5; Phil. 3. 19; Matt. 22. 37, 38; 1 Tim. 1. 5; 6. 10; Matt. 16. 24; Luke 14. 26.

8. When Jeroboam thus sinned he lost his most valuable subjects. They would not abandon God, and hence they left his kingdom. The relation of godliness to national and municipal preservation. Gen. 18. 23-33; Jer. 5. 1; Ezek. 22. 30; Job 33. 23, 24; Isa. 1. 10-14; 59. 1, 2; Matt. 5. 13; 13. 43; Psa. 37. 25; Prov. 14. 34.

Lessons:

1. The official lives of Rehoboam and Jeroboam are a most impressive illustration of golden opportunities wasted.

2. The mother of Rehoboam was an Ammonitess: his blood, not his theology, governed him.

3. God affords many brilliant chances, but only personal righteousness can successfully prosecute them, ver. 25.

4. Jeroboam was wise enough to consider what most modern statesmen forget, that religion is vitally related to wholesome politics. ver. 27.

5. The Jews were accustomed to approach God in worship through the symbol of the cherubim, and Jeroboam, not unnaturally, thought the golden calves, while not sacrilegiously duplicating these, could be similarly used. ver. 28.

6. Jeroboam, however, sinned. If he had read the word, to which he had abundant access, he would have known better, and, doubtless, he knew better.

7. It was Jeroboam's fault that Israel sinned, but Israel suffered for yielding to the temptation. v. 30.

8. It was not a modification of unessential theology that Jeroboam sought to bring to pass in Israel, but a duplication of their revealed devotional system.

9. Let neither king nor subject specifically venture but as God directs.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Review rapidly the facts of the last lesson.... Show the map, and locate on it *Jerusalem, Beth-el, Shechem,*

Peniel, Dan.... Word-pictures of: 1.) Jeroboam as a builder; 2.) Jeroboam as a political schemer; 3.) Jeroboam as an idol-maker; 4.) Jeroboam as a priest.... The sins of Jeroboam are summarized in the Analytical and Biblical Outline.... Jeroboam founded a Church which is in existence still, and some classes among its members are named in the Thoughts for Young People.... **ILLUSTRATIONS.** "Bloody Queen Mary" is a name attached to one of the queens of England. There is a worse epithet, "Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin.".... Contrast Jeroboam, forsaking God for worldly policy, with Luther, singing, "A mighty fortress is our God.".... The name of David (ver. 26) was in Israel what the name of Napoleon became in France. It was said during the reign of Louis Philippe, "If some one would stand Napoleon's cocked hat on a stick on the shore of France it would cause a revolution.".... Gibbon wrote of the various religions of the Roman Empire, "They were all considered by the people as equally true, by the learned as equally false, and by the rulers as equally useful." The latter was Jeroboam's conception of religion.

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 25: How cities were "built," 366. Ver. 28: Calf worship, 138.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is a stir among the goldsmiths. They are melting the shining golden ore. They are refining it. They are shaping it. They are polishing it. It is something to stand before the nation, stimulate, guide, lead it forward. Will it stir the nation to thoughts of purity, honesty, self-denial, reverence, that in the day of duty shall give courage, in persecution give persistence, in temptation give victory? What will it be? The statue of the country's noblest, grandest man who fought down wrong ambition, controlled pride, rebuked cowardice, exalted reverence, led his country to greatest achievement and for his country was a sacrifice? No—only—a calf! There are two calves even! To these, the nation will bring offerings, will prostrate itself before them in worship, will cry out for their bovine blessing! O shame, shame! In all this wickedness, Jeroboam is a leader. He erects a calf in Bethel, a calf in Dan. He cries to Israel, "Behold thy gods!" There he stands before the stupid blasphemous substitute for the great Jehovah. He has builded an altar. He offers sacrifices. He burns incense. All the while the dead eyes of the brute he worships do not see. Its dead ears do not hear. The king's sacrilegious offering is greeted with a silly leer that will be on the creature's face to-morrow, next month, next year. What if the earth refuse to support this iniquity, open and receive to a hopeless grave this sacrilegious show!

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Putting God First.* Review the last lesson; make twelve small triangles on the board to stand for the twelve tribes of Israel. Set off two of them, and tell that these represent the tribes that stayed by Rehoboam, while the remaining ten tribes set up a kingdom by themselves, and chose Jeroboam to be their king. Jeroboam had far the larger country and the larger number of subjects. God had promised to bless him and make his kingdom strong if he would obey and serve him. Tell that Jeroboam walked in God's ways for a while; then he began to be afraid that some of his people would want Rehoboam for their king. Was he trusting God when he was afraid? No,

he began to put something ahead of God, when he began to plan how he should make his kingdom strong.

THE SIN IN THE HEART.

Tell that at first Jeroboam's sin seemed very small; it was only a thought in his heart. He thought, "I must look out for myself." Tell what plans he made, and what he did first. He was planning to save his own life, and his kingdom. Show that the idol in Jeroboam's heart was self. When it began to speak, he listened. What should he have done? Shut his ears and said, "I will not hear you; I will hear what God says." Tell how self may speak in a child's heart. It may tell you to be proud of your nice clothes; or to want teacher to think you are better than you are; or to love play better than you love your lesson. Any thing that you love better than God is an idol, and at first it comes to you only as a thought in the heart. Put it out, by God's help, or it will grow as it did in Jeroboam's heart.

THE OPEN SIN.

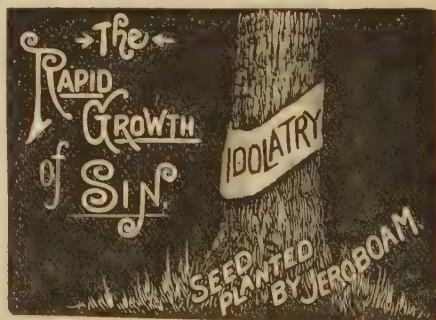


Teach that God can always see the sin even when it is hidden from the eyes of man. At first Jeroboam's acts may have looked right, but he was disobeying God, and that always leads to open sin. Tell how from setting up the calves as the symbols of God he went on to build temples and ordain

feasts, and finally to offer sacrifice himself to the calves he had made. Tell that the king did not mean to do so many wrong things, but the trouble came through breaking one of God's commands. Ask which one Jeroboam broke first, and teach that if we want God to be on our side we must put him first in all things. Show that an evil thought is like a serpent coiled up in the heart. Let it stay there and it will grow until it fills the heart. Who can kill the serpent sin? Only Jesus, the great Conqueror. If we pray to him, he will not only kill the sin, but he will come and live in our hearts to keep sin out.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. This diagram is intended to illustrate the rapid growth of sin. King Jeroboam planted the seed of idolatry; it quickly took root, and became a full-grown tree, hard to be overthrown, and bearing sinful fruit. The application to be made from this illustration is to warn the school of the danger of little seeds of sin that Satan sows in the heart. If not plucked up by the roots, they grow as rapidly as did idolatry in the time of King Jeroboam, and will become established.

B. C. 925.]

LESSON III. OMRI AND AHAB.

[July 19.]

1 Kings 16. 23-34. [*Commit to memory verses 30-33.*]

23 In the thirty and first year of A'sa king of Ju'dah began Om'ri to reign over Is'ra-el, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tir'zah.

24 And he bought the hill Sa-ma'-ri-a of She'mer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of She'mer, owner of the hill, Sa-ma'-ri-a.

25 But Om'ri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that *were* before him.

26 For he walked in all the way of Jer'o-bo'am the son of Ne'bat, and in his sin wherewith he made Is'ra-el to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Is'ra-el to anger with their vanities.

27 Now the rest of the acts of Om'ri which he did, and his might that he showed, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Is'ra-el?

28 So Om'ri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Sa-ma'-ri-a: and A'hab his son reigned in his stead.

General Statement

The sun of Jeroboam, which had risen in splendor, set in disgrace and failure upon a people alienated from God and wedded to idols. The family fell from his throne, and an age of revolution followed, with frequent changes, and much bloodshed, until at last Omri grasped the crown with firm hands, and ushered in a new era in the history of Israel. Politically speaking, the reigns of Omri and his son Ahab were a period of success. The long war between the two kingdoms was ended, and peace and alliance and intermarriage between the royal houses took its place. The rising cloud in the north, the Syrian kingdom, was held in check, though constantly threatening danger to both the Israelite lands. Fraternal relations were entered into with Phœnicia on the shore of the Great Sea, bringing wealth in abundance to the ten tribes. Moab and Ammon on the east were tributary, and the new capital, Samaria, stood in strength. But there was another view, and a differ-

29 And in the thirty and eighth year of A'sa king of Ju'dah began A'hab the son of Om'ri to reign over Is'ra-el: and A'hab the son of Om'ri reigned over Is'ra-el in Sa-ma'-ri-a twenty and two years.

30 And A'hab the son of Om'ri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that *were* before him.

31 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jer'o-bo'am the son of Ne'bat, that he took to wife Jeze'bel, the daughter of Eth'ba'al, king of the Zi-do'n'i-ans, and went and served Ba'al, and worshiped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Ba'al in the house of Ba'al, which he had built in Sa-ma'-ri-a.

33 And A'hab made a grove; and A'hab did more to provoke the LORD God of Is'ra-el to anger than all the kings of Is'ra-el that were before him.

34 In his days did Hi'e'l the Beth'-el-i'te build Jer'i-cho: he laid the foundation thereof in A-bi-ram first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Se'gub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Josh'u-a the son of Nun.

ent standard, by which this age was not golden, but of baser metal. The great question is not as to how a people appear to themselves, and to their neighbors, but what is God's estimate of them. Measured by this test, the age of Omri and of Ahab was one of unmix'd evil. It saw Israel drift farther away from God, and not content with the worship of the golden calves, run wild in the debasing service of Baal, with all its hideous shame. It saw the king of Israel wedded to a foreign princess, whose strong will and wicked heart ruled his weaker nature. It saw the prophets of God persecuted to the death, slain with the sword, wandering in deserts, starving in caves, and the altars of God torn down to give place to the images of Baal. It saw violence and wickedness oversweep the land, until the cup of iniquity was full, and the sword of vengeance was ready to be barred.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 23. Thirty and first year of Asa. Asa was the grandson of Rehoboam; and reigned prosperously in Judah. **Began Omri.** While the house of David sat secure in Judah, and three kings reigned successively in peace, six kings, representing four families, ruled in Israel; Jeroboam's son was murdered; the succeeding dynasty ended with another murder, and after a civil war Omri, the ablest man of the time, seated himself upon the throne, which was held by his family during four generations. **Twelve years.** His reign is here dated from his assumption of the throne, not from the death of his rival. **In Tir'zah.** This was a place famed for its beauty (Song of Solomon 6. 4), and situated in the region known as Mount Ephraim. The latest identification places it at *Tel-asir*, twelve miles east of Samaria.

24. He bought the hill Samaria. In most Oriental countries, the king is supposed to be the owner of all the territory, and absolute master of his subjects; but in Israel the rights of the people were guarded, and not even the king could rob them with impunity. (1) *The Bible is the fountain of constitutional law and of liberty.* **Of She'mer.** Who is unknown in history, except through this transaction. **Two talents of silver.** Between \$3,000 and \$5,000, which seems a high price, considering the fact that the money would purchase twenty times as much then as the same sum will now. **Built on the hill.** It is thirty miles north of Jerusalem, and six miles north-west of Shechem, upon a hill with steep sides, and a long, level summit. The city remained to the last the capital of the ten tribes, and gave its name to the province. In the New Testament period it was called *Sebaste* (Greek for Augustus), and was the scene of Philip's labors. Acts 8. 5-9. It is now a wretched village, called *Sebastiyeh*. **Samaria.** The word means "watching," or "watch-tower," which may have been another reason for retaining it as the name of the city.

25. Omri wrought evil. The tendency of sin is ever downward, and Omri went with the current. Idolatry became more rife, and the people strayed still farther from God. "The statutes of Omri," named in Micah 6. 16, perhaps forbade the people from going to Jeru-

salem, and required idol-worship. **Worse than all that were before him.** Notice that the greatness of Omri, which is shown by the Assyrian inscriptions, is scarcely mentioned, while his character is dwelt upon. (2) *God cares more for goodness than for greatness, while men forget character in seeming success.* (3) *Wickedness has power of reproduction and growth, both in men and nations.*

26. The way of Jeroboam. (4) *Notice how vast and far-reaching may be one man's influence for evil.* Jeroboam stands in Scripture as "the man who made Israel to sin." **To provoke the Lord.** Our anger is often a petulant, personal feeling: God's anger is against wrong-doing, and is never severed from his justice. **With their vanities.** This term is generally applied in Scripture to idols and the worship of them. Idolatry is especially offensive to God, because it degrades the conception of his nature and character, and because it is always associated with wickedness. No idol-worshipping race ever elevated the tone of morals or the standards of character.

27. The acts of Omri. He was king when the new kingdom of Syria was just rising to prominence, and threatening to become dominant over Western Asia; and his reign was occupied in war with that power. **His might.** The Assyrian inscriptions of centuries afterward show his greatness, for they invariably call Samaria *Beth Khumri*, "the house of Omri," and its king "the son of Omri," long after his dynasty had ceased to rule. **Chronicles of the kings of Israel.** Not our book of Chronicles, which relates to Judah; but a collection of official records which has not been preserved.

28. Omri slept with his fathers. An expression referring to the sepulcher in the common earth, where king and commons are on an equality. (5) *Even a king must go to meet his judgment before the higher court of the King of kings.* **Ahab his son reigned.** His reign is related with greater detail than that of any other king of Israel, because the greatest of the prophets flourished at his epoch.

29. Thirty and eighth year. If Omri's reign of

twelve years be reckoned from the thirty-first of Asa, in Judah, then Ahab could not have succeeded him at the date here given; but it is probable that Omri's reign is counted from an earlier date. **Ahab . . . reigned twenty and two years.** He was a brave and successful warrior, holding in check the rising power of Syria; an able statesman, ending the long feud between Israel and Judah by an alliance which lasted for nearly a century; and a patron of arts, building palaces and cities. The misfortune was in marrying a heathen princess, whose force of character made him her tool and slave.

30. Did evil in the sight of the Lord. (6) *The true test of conduct is not popular opinion, but the standard set up by the Lord. Above all that were before.* Again we notice the growing tendency of evil—Jeroboam, bad; Omri, worse; Ahab, worst. The first step involves all its sequences, and the final leap into the gulf of destruction.

31. As if it had been a light thing. (7) *The great crimes of one generation are but light things to the next, as they become more common. Sins of Jeroboam.* See how the sacred writer keeps in the foreground the initial wickedness which led to all the rest. **He took to wife.** Heretofore, the kings had married among their own people, thus keeping the nation distinct from the heathen peoples around; but Ahab broke down the restraints of the law, and thereby introduced a flood of iniquities. (8) *How important it is to choose a companion for life from God's people, rather than from the world!* **Jezebel.** She was the Lady Macbeth of her age, the power behind the throne, the real ruler of Israel. In character she was energetic, prompt, and bold, fearless of none, and feared by all, even by the prophet Elijah. She persecuted and slew the prophets of God, brought into Israel the wicked, and therefore fascinating, worship of Baal, which was far more corrupting than that of the calves; and was the central figure in the history for thirty years, long after her husband's death. In Jehu's revolution she faced death with a boldness

worthy of a better cause, and in her end won admiration even from her enemies. **Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians.** He is named in secular history as a priest of Baal who headed a revolution, seized the throne of Phenicia, and founded a dynasty. He was an ancestor of Queen Dido, the founder of Carthage. **Served Baal.** Baal represented the sun, and was worshipped under various names and images. This form of idolatry was attended with great wickedness, and corrupted the morals of all who participated in it.

32, 33. Reared up an altar for Baal. Making the altar of Baal in Samaria the center of influence corresponding but opposite to that emanating from the altar of Jehovah in Jerusalem. **The house of Baal.** This was an idol temple in Samaria, which, with its out-buildings for the residence of the priests, formed almost a city. It was afterward destroyed by Jehu. **Made a grove.** This is an incorrect translation for the word Asherah, the female divinity associated with Baal. It probably refers to the image of Asherah (plural Ash-taroht), which may have been erected in groves.

34. In his days. As an instance of the contempt for God and his law which was prevalent during the reign of Ahab, this act is cited. (9) *Wicked rulers are apt to have godless subjects. Hiel the Beth-elite.* A man otherwise unknown, who removed from Beth-el among the mountains down to Jericho in the Jordan valley. **Jericho.** A city north of the Dead Sea, destroyed by Joshua, and though rebuilt soon afterward, remaining unvalled 500 years, on account of Joshua's curse, until this unbelieving age of Ahab. **Laid the foundation.** Not of the city, but of its walls. **In Abiram his first-born.** It means, probably, that his eldest son died at the beginning of the work, and his youngest at its close; perhaps also that his other sons perished during the interval. **According to the word of the Lord.** (10) *God's word is sure; but let it comfort us that his promises are as sure as his threatenings. Spake by Joshua.* See the account in Josh. 6. 24-26.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Omri and Ahab. 1 Kings 16. 23-34.
Tu. Abijam's wicked reign. 1 Kings 15. 1-8.
W. The revolution of Asa. 1 Kings 15. 9-24.
Th. The acts of Nadab. 1 Kings 15. 25-34.
F. The evil of Omri and Ahab remembered. Micah 6. 1-16.
S. Baal worshipped. Judges 2. 1-13.
S. God's displeasure with the wicked. Prov. 15. 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. Prov. 15. 9.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 365.

Vain man, thy fond pursuits forbear;
 Repent, thine end is nigh;
 Death, at the farthest, can't be far:
 O think before thou die.
 Reflect, thou hast a soul to save;
 Thy sins, how high they mount!
 What are thy hopes beyond the grave?
 How stands that dark account?
 Thy flesh, perhaps thy greatest care,
 Shall into dust consume;
 But, ah! destruction stops not there;
 Sin kills beyond the tomb.

TIME.—Omri's accession, B. C. 925; Ahab's, B. C. 918.

PLACES.—1. Tirzah, the second capital of the ten tribes, nine miles north-east of Shechem; 2. Samaria, six miles north-west of Shechem; 3. Zidon, on the Mediterranean Sea, near Tyre; 4. Jericho, in the Jordan Valley, near the Dead Sea.

RULERS.—Omri and Ahab, sixth and seventh Kings of Israel; Asa, third King of Judah; Ben-hadad I., King of Damascus; Eth-baal, King of Tyre and Zidon; Zerah, or Osorkon I., King of Egypt; Assur-dan II., in Assyria.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. Jeroboam's worship of idols led to rebuke from a prophet of God. 2. After Jeroboam changes were frequent until Omri.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Sin's downward tendency.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. The Sins of Omri, v. 23-28.**
 How long did Omri reign?
 What city did he build?
 What was the character of his reign?
 Whose wicked example did he follow?
 For what was he distinguished?
 Where was he buried?
- 2. The Sins of Ahab, v. 29-34.**
 Who succeeded Omri?
 How long did he reign?
 What bad pre-eminence had he?
 What wicked alliance did he form?
 What strange god did he worship?
 What honors did he offer it?
 What bold wickedness was attempted in his reign?
 What was the result of it?
 What prophecy did this fulfill?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. The evil of forsaking God?
2. The effect of one man's sin upon another?
3. That death follows disobedience to the divine command?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Sins of Omri, v. 23-28.**
 When did Omri begin to reign over Israel?
 How long did he rule?
 Where did he live during the first half of his reign?
 What city did he build?
 What was his character?
 Whose example did he follow?
 What sin had Jeroboam committed?
 With what was God displeased? Deut. 32. 16.
 Where was Omri buried?
 Who became king at his death?
- 2. The Sins of Ahab, v. 29-34.**
 Who was king of Judah when Ahab began to reign?
 How long had he been king?
 What was the length of Ahab's reign?
 What was the character of his rule?
 Whom did he marry?
 What command did he disobey in this act? Deut. 7. 3.
 What idol-worship did he establish?

Who helped him in his wickedness? 1 Kings 21. 25.
 What city was rebuilt in his reign?
 What curse had been uttered against its builder?
 Josh. 6. 26.
 How was the curse fulfilled?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson is shown—

1. The power of an evil example?
2. The power of evil associations?
3. The divine displeasure against sin?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Were the kings of Judah good or bad men? **Most of them were good.**

How was it with the kings of Israel? **They seemed to grow worse and worse.**

Who was more wicked than any who had been before him? **Omri.**

What city was founded while he was king? **Samaria, which became the chief city of the kingdom.**

Who was most wicked of all the kings of Israel? **Ahab.**

Whom did he marry and let rule his kingdom? **Jezabel, a very wicked woman.**

What did she drive the people to do? **Worship Baal, which was worse than worshipping the calves.**

Where did she build a temple to her gods? **In Samaria.**

What did she do with God's prophets? **She hunted them out, killed many, and made the rest hide.**

Do you remember about the walls of Jericho falling down in the days of Joshua?

What curse did God say would come upon the man who rebuilt them? **"He should lay the foundation in his oldest son, and set up the gates in his youngest."**

How long was it before any one dared to do it? **More than five hundred years.**

While Ahab was king, who rebuilt them? **A man from Beth-el, named Hiel.**

Did the curse fall upon Hiel? **It did; for when he began the wall his oldest son died, and when he built the gates the youngest died.**

Do you think God is as true to his threatenings as he is to his promises?

Words with Little People.

If you abominate a thing you hate it, you turn away from it, you will not have anything at all to do with it; that is just the way God feels toward sin. [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.] What then shall you do with all your sins, those you have forgotten, besides all you can remember, those you committed yesterday and to-day? **"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Take them all to him.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What was Omri before he was made king of Israel? **Captain of the host.**
2. What kind of a king was he? **A very wicked one.**
3. Who succeeded Omri as king? **His son, Ahab.**
4. What did Ahab do? **"Reared up an altar for Baal."**
5. What was Ahab as king? **More wicked than all those before him.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....
 Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Like Father, Like Son.

I. OMRI'S WICKED REIGN.

1. *Began Omri to reign.* v. 23.
"Removeth kings, and setteth up kings." Dan. 2. 21.
2. *Wrought evil.* v. 25.
"Woe to them that....work evil." Micah 2. 1.

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3. *Worse than all....before him.* v. 25.
"No fear of God before his eyes." Psa. 36. 1-4.
4. *Walked in....way of Jeroboam.* v. 26.
"Returned not from his evil way." 1 Kings 13. 33.
5. *Provoked the Lord God.* v. 26.
"With the works of your hands." Jer. 44. 8.
6. *So Omri....was buried.* v. 28.
"Evil-doers shall be cut off." Psa. 37. 9.

II. AHAB'S WORSE REIGN.

1. *Ahab, the son of Omri, reigned.* v. 29.
"Rebellious children....add sin to sin." Isa. 30. 1.
2. *Did evil in the sight of the Lord.* v. 30.
"Heart....fully set....to do evil." Eccl. 8. 11.
3. *Took to wife Jezebel.* v. 31.
"Be not....yoked....with unbelievers." 2 Cor. 6. 14.
4. *Served Baal and worshiped him.* v. 31.
"Forgotten my name for Baal." Jer. 23. 27.
5. *Made a grove.* v. 31.
"Served groves and idols." 2 Chron. 24. 18.
6. *Did more to provoke the Lord.* v. 33.
"Evil men....worse and worse." 2 Tim. 3. 13.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Results of Forsaking God.

1. We see in this lesson a people who have forsaken God. One result of this course was disorder and anarchy; for when men renounce God, they sunder the ties that bind men together.

2. Another result of forsaking God is growth in wickedness. Sin never stands still, but goes on from worse to worse, from Jeroboam to Omri, and from Omri to Ahab.

3. We see too that there may be worldly prosperity while there is moral decay. Israel was most wicked while it was most powerful.

4. We see that those who forsake God seek worldly and wicked associations, which entangle them still worse in the toils of sin.

5. We see that those who forsake God learn to despise his commands. Hiel ventured to build the wall in spite of God's threatenings.

6. We see that the innocent children suffer with their guilty parents, as the result of sin. The drunkard's family bear the burden for his crime.

English Teacher's Notes.

I sometimes stand on a bright, sunny day, and gaze over the sea from the cliffs which rise above it. Every thing looks fair, and seems to promise a continuance of favorable weather. But an ominous sound spoils the prospect. A deep low roar issuing from the otherwise calm stretch of water warns the listener that the brightness is not to last. The sun may set in a cloudless sky, yet rain and probably stormy weather are sure to follow, for that sound is one which in this neighborhood never deceives. A stranger might say, "Fair Weather," but one acquainted with the place knows that there are storms approaching.

The greater part of our passage for to-day gives us a picture of prosperity. After days of war and tumult peace has come to the kingdom of Israel. Omri is king. And Omri is apparently all his life a successful man.

Where do we first see him? At the head of the Israelite army, which is besieging Gibbethon, to

recover it from the Philistines. Josh. 19. 44. Suddenly the news arrives that the king is murdered and the murderer has usurped the throne. At once the army decides on making Omri king, and in a short time Zimri is vanquished, the leader set up as a rival to Omri is likewise overcome, and the latter remains in sole possession. By and by he looks about for another residence, and fixes on the finest situation in the whole land, and purchases the hill of Samaria, the "crown of pride," the place of "glorious beauty" (Isa. 28. 1, 3), and there builds his palace and city. Twelve years he reigns over Israel, in undisputed possession, strong and prosperous. Ver. 27. That is one part of the picture.

But is there nothing else? Whoever it was that wrote the records of that time was aware of a deep and ominous sound which, in spite of outward prosperity, was the presage of coming woe: "Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord." It is true we read of no judgment overtaking him. He is suffered to retain the kingdom till his death. But what then? Was there a peaceful committing of the soul to God—a bright hope for the future—a memory held in honor? Look at Psa. 73. 17-19, and see the end of the wicked. What was all Omri's prosperity worth when he closed his eyes in death?

But his son Ahab succeeded to the throne without opposition, and soon there was a heathen queen in Israel, a temple built for Baal the sun-god, and a grove for idolatrous worship—all this, for a time, with impunity. But the storm was ready to fall. If the generally received interpretation of ver. 34 is correct the outburst came upon an individual, the man who dared to brave the curse of Jehovah, and rebuild the walls of Jericho. Josh. 6. 26. Such an act of audacious rebellion could only have been the outcome of long years of idolatry, during which men learned to say: "How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" Psa. 73. 11. Then followed the years of famine and distress (chap. 17. 1, etc.), and eventually the terrible fate of Ahab and all his house. Chap. 22. 34-38; 9. 24, etc.; 10. 6, 7.

1. *The hollowness of prosperity without godliness.* It is thought a fine thing to be successful. No doubt many looked up with admiration to Omri, who won and kept the kingdom of Israel. They would admire "his might which he showed." And others would look at his fine palace on the hill of Samaria, and perhaps envy him his splendor and luxury. Just so men now admire the smart, clever fellow who makes his way in the world. The man who acquires wealth and station is nearly sure to gain a good deal of respect with them. But suppose he has used underhand means to get on, taken advantage of his neighbor, thought only of himself, neglected the commands of God, what does the Bible say of his way? It is an abomination to the Lord (Golden Text). Men may admire it; God hates it. Men may praise it; God condemns it. Would any boy or girl seriously care to change places with the man or woman (Jezebel must have been a bright, clever, successful woman) whose way is abominable to the God who rules on high?

Would such prosperity be worth having if the Judge and Disposer of all frowns upon it?

2. *The certainty of God's judgment on the ungodly.* But Omri escaped all visible punishment? Yes; so far as we know. But the most dreadful judgment of all is to be let alone (Hos. 4. 17), allowed to go until the storm bursts. And if a man goes on till death, see what comes after. Heb. 9. 27. Of Ahab we shall yet hear more. Of Hiel we have heard already. Look at 1 Tim. 5. 24. Is it safe to go on in the dangerous path because the blow is withheld for a time?

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Omri and Ahab. 1 Kings 16, 23-34.

1. The "Golden Text" of to-day's lesson is the eternal mind of God toward unrighteousness. Isa. 14. 19; 57. 20, 21; Ezek. 2. 6; Matt. 7. 26, 27; 23. 33; Luke 6. 43; Deut. 25. 16; Prov. 6. 16-19; Jer. 16. 18; Rev. 18. 5.

2. The kings of God's chosen people should have ruled in righteousness, for, doubtless, they have access to such instructions as Psa. 2. 10-12; 33. 16; Deut. 17. 18-20; 1 Kings 2. 3; 2 Sam. 23. 2; Prov. 8. 15; 14. 35; 16. 10, 12, 13; 17. 7; 25. 2; 28. 16; 29. 14; 31. 3, 5, 8, 9.

3. The parallel histories of Judah and Israel, governed as these kingdoms were sometimes by evil and sometimes by good monarchs, well illustrate the general inspiration that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Isa. 1. 3-5, 16; 5. 4-7; Jer. 6. 12, 13; 2 Chron. 21. 12, 13; Lev. 18. 25; Ezek. 14. 11; 20. 11-13; Matt. 11. 21-24; Jonah 3. 10; Judges 10. 15, 16.

4. Sin, which is being in character and doing in conduct as God forbids in his word and in the constitution of the soul, has ruined our poor race. Would that the fatal malady had not spread beyond the kings of divided Israel! 1 Kings 8. 46; Job 11. 14; 15. 14; Psa. 51. 5; 90. 8; Isa. 1. 18; Jer. 44. 4, 11; Amos 3. 2; Ezek. 16. 52; Num. 32. 23.

5. Omri was wise in locating his capital. The site of Samaria was in some respects better than that of Jerusalem, its rival. Read its sad history; note the fruit of sin. 1 Kings 16. 32, 33, with 2 Kings 10. 18-28; 20; 22. 39; Isa. 9. 9; Ezek. 16. 46-55; 2 Kings 6. 24; 7. 1-20; 17. 3-6; Hosea 10. 5-7.

6. "For the statutes of Omri are kept" (Micah 6. 16), explains the hitherto unprecedented enormity of this ruler's sin, ver. 25. Whose statutes should be kept? Deut. 17. 18; 27. 26; Josh. 8. 34; Neh. 8; 2 Kings 23. 2; Gal. 3. 10; James 2. 10; Psa. 119. 14; 1 Cor. 7. 19; Mal. 4. 4.

7. "Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord." Perhaps he pleased his subjects. Omniscience is man's critic, ver. 25. Psa. 139. 1-6, 23; Prov. 5. 21; 17. 3; 1 Chron. 28. 9; Jer. 17. 10; Rom. 8. 27; Psa. 7. 9; 44. 21; Josh. 24. 19; Heb. 12. 29.

8. It was Elijah, the eminent prophet of God, that made the era of Ahab's reign memorable. 1 Kings 17-19; 21; 2 Kings 1. 2; 2 Chron. 21. 12-19; Luke 9. 28-35; Mal. 4. 5, 6; Matt. 17. 10-13.

9. God would have us familiar with Baal, whose worship won the heart of Ahab, and so he has recorded. Judges 6. 25-32; 2 Kings 10. 18-28; Jer. 50. 2; 32. 29; 2 Kings 23. 12; Num. 25. 3; Judges 2. 13; 8. 33; Hosea 9. 10; 1 Sam. 7. 4.

10. Men, and especially men in high position, cannot sin unfruitfully. Sin begets sin. Note this power of bad example. Prov. 2. 12; 1. 10; 4. 14; 19. 27; 1 Cor.

15. 33; Exod. 34. 12; Psa. 119. 115; Eph. 5. 7; Rom. 1. 32; Phil. 2. 5.

Lessons:

1. Omri sinned worse than any of his kingly predecessors. Man's sinning power strengthens by use, ver. 25.

2. The tendency in sinning, as in many other things, is not to imitation, but to originality, and, if possible, pre-eminence.

3. Men who sin, sin with the heart. God only can read the heart, ver. 25.

4. The anger of passion is sinful, but the anger of indignation against sin is lawful, ver. 26.

5. The sinning son imitating the sinning father is able to exceed him by the weight of his originality as a transgressor.

6. Ahab's peculiar guilt consisted in his choice of temptation. He actually married it! v. 31.

7. Man worships in the line of his material outlay. His supreme love is very expensive. Gladly he pays the cost of his real God.

8. Men verbally confess supreme affections—talk of their God.

9. All who indulge in Astarte, or licentiousness, in reality defy it, ver. 33.

10. Disobedience is idolatry. The rebuilding of Jericho proved that God had been forgotten. His prohibition was disregarded.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Find in this lesson *three persons*, and the wicked conduct related of each....Find here *three places*, and a fact about each....Find three kinds of buildings named in this lesson—who built them, and for what purpose.An outline may be drawn, showing Tirzah, Samaria, Zidon, Beth-el, Jericho....Show how this lesson presents the results of sin. (See Thoughts for Young People)....The *dangers* pointed out in this lesson: 1.) Worldly prosperity apart from God's service; 2.) Progress in evil-doing; 3.) Association with the wicked, especially in marriage; 4.) Contempt for God's word, and neglect of his warnings....ILLUSTRATION. [From the *Sunday-School Times*, 1877.] "How God looks at it is the true test of conduct. College boys often think a thing is right because 'all the fellows do it.' They will even break their written promise to the faculty, or act a lie in recitation, or steal examination papers, or join in a class rebellion, without a twinge of conscience. Many a merchant or politician is sure there is no harm in a common mode of cheating, since no one in his business thinks it is improper. There are very few people who do not count a kind or a place of amusement, a habit of life, or a style of speech, fairly correct when 'every body' says it is so. But, after all, if a thing is 'evil in the sight of the Lord,' no popular verdict can make it any thing else than evil at any time."—*Trumbull*.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 33: *Asherah*, "grove," 222. Ver. 34: "Building" of Jericho, 366.

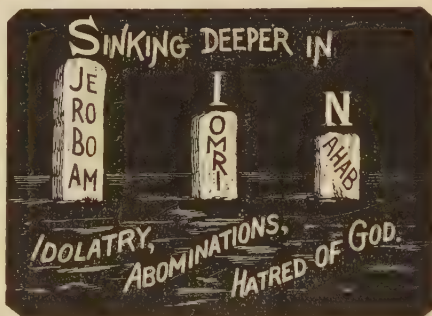
Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is a bustle among the carpenters and masons. The stones are coming together. The timbers are interlocking. The walls are rising. The new king, Omri, is building Samaria. Does he keep clear of idolatry, or does he encourage the practices that will be like millstones around the nation's neck, sinking it in depths of idolatry? And after Omri, behold a son like the father, even Ahab. Like the husband will be the wife. Who

shall reign with Ahab? One day there is the clatter of hoofs outside Samaria's gates. What a braying and neighing! What a great procession of horses, of asses, of camels, all from the sea-coast. And who owns the dark, evil eyes that peep out from that veil—some woman that is the imperial center of this retinue, the object for which it was gathered? She is loaded with jewels, but harder than her jewels is her hard face, and her heart is harder yet. The stout gates of Samaria open. The horses, the asses, the camels, the jeweled woman, all enter. The people shout. But O, at the entry of what a curse do the people lift up their stormy welcome! Did they see the idolatrous images she may have brought from Zidon? If she left these behind, she brought an idolatrous heart. An admitted evil worse than the plague. Did she bring an idolater's heart? Ahab has it also. It is like unto like. Do the people realize what a vindictive, blood-craving spirit, incarnate in that woman, has come to Samaria? Ahab is vindictive also. It is like meeting like. Ahab and Jezebel, they stand before their idols. They kiss their hands to the images. They make their offerings. The flames crackle and flare and smoke, while the idols grin senselessly at this impious display.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. The blackboard illustrates the downward tendency of sin. The three kings—Jeroboam, Omri, and Ahab—are represented by three pillars sinking in the mire of sin. In drawing them you can place a crown on each one. The longer that one remains in sin the deeper he sinks. You can leave off the sentence at the top, and when you review the lesson, first write the word KING, and then write the name, or names, immediately following. After speaking of their lives, write SIN just before the word king, and you will have it read, *Sinking Jeroboam*, etc.

APPLICATION. The downward tendency of sin, now as well as then.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. How Sin Spreads.

INTRODUCTORY. Divide the blackboard into two parts, one much larger than the other. In the smaller make two small triangles, in the other ten. Thus recall the division of the kingdom. Write "Judah" over one, "Israel" over the other. Get from class names of the first kings. Recall Rehoboam's pride and folly. Recall what children know of Jeroboam, his distrust of God, which led to the worship of the golden calves. Tell that fifty years had passed since these kings began to

reign. There had been other kings, some good, some bad. Tell that in the kingdom of Judah there had been good kings since the time of Rehoboam and his wicked son, who had led the people back to the Lord. But in Israel the kings had grown worse and worse. Show that evil grows very fast.

OMRI.



Use blackboard symbol. Omri was now king of Israel. He wore a crown, and rich robes. He was general of a great army. He built a great city named Samaria. He did many things that seemed wise and great in the eyes of men. Tell of the Moabite stone found in 1868 by

a missionary, which tells about Omri's splendor and power. But all this time, while Omri thought himself so great, and men talked about his riches and wisdom, there was a chain which bound him fast in the service of a cruel master. God saw this chain, though men did not. "In the eyes of the Lord" Omri was bound with the chain of sin. Teach that no evil act is hidden from God's sight, and that when people think we are very good we may all the time be in Satan's chains. Make

large links of a chain on the board, and let children name them—Pride, Untruth, Self-will, etc. Show how the chain grows stronger with every new link added, and teach that only Jesus can break the chain.

AHAB.

Ask if children think that when Omri died his bad influence died with him. His son Ahab had learned to be wicked from his father. Teach that no one can keep evil shut up in his own heart. It will come out and spread. A little boy built a bonfire in a meadow of dry grass. He thought he could keep it in a small place, but it spread over the whole field. So sin spreads. Tell how Ahab encouraged the people in idolatry by marrying a heathen wife. Ahab was worse than his father Omri. He married a bad woman, and she led him farther into evil ways than he had gone before. Talk about evil companions, and warn children not to associate with profane, untruthful playmates. Call for Golden Text, and teach that it is not much matter what men think, but we should care a great deal what God thinks of us. Warn against small beginnings of sin. Jeroboam thought the worship of the calves a small thing. Be careful not to let in bad thoughts, and remember only Jesus can keep them out.

B. C. 910.]

LESSON IV. ELIJAH THE TISHBITE.

[July 26.]

1 Kings 17. 1-16. [Commit to memory verses 5-9.]



1 And E-li'jah the Tish'bite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto A'h'ab, As the LORD God of Is'ra-el liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee

eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cher'ith, that is before Jor'dan.

4 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cher'ith, that is before Jordan.

6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to Zar'e-phath, which belongeth to Zi-don, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose and went to Zar'e-phath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

13 And E-li'jah said unto her, Fear not: go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son:

14 For thus saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and did according to the saying of E-li'jah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

16 And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by E-li'jah.

General Statement.

In the hour when the cause of God seemed at its lowest ebb, when the worst of kings was on the throne, and the bitterest foe of Jehovah sat as queen beside him, when Baal was in full power, and the ministers of God were persecuted to the death, in that hour arose the mightiest of all the Old Testament prophets—Elijah the Tishbite. We know nothing of his family, his ancestry, or his training, except that he had grown up in the free air of Gilead, and afar from the corrupting influence of the court. He came to stand as uncompromisingly for Jehovah as Jezebel stood for Baal, to match his force and his will against hers, and to answer her persecution of the prophets of Jehovah with his own slaughter of the priests of Baal. Unheralded, he bursts upon the scene, and uninvited he stands in presence of

the king, his rough mantle and unshorn hair marking a contrast with the jeweled and robed courtiers. His message is brief and terrible; no good tidings of mercy, but the warning of wrath. He does not even call to repentance, nor invite to faith. He simply forewarns of coming doom, and then stalks forth from the royal presence as suddenly as he came. It is as if a bolt of lightning had shot forth from the sky, and then folded itself away, so suddenly did the rough prophet drop out of sight. We see him again communing with God by the brook, feeding upon the slender store brought by his winged servitors, bearing comfort and support to the widow of Zarephath, and every-where he appears as the man of fellowship with God, of faith, and of obedience.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. **Elijah.** His name means "Jehovah is my God," and the name expressed his character, which was uncompromising and radical in fidelity to the God of Israel. We know very little of his history and nothing of his ancestry. (1) Not "who" a man is, but

"what" he is, is the important question. **The Tishbite.** Perhaps indicating that he was a native of a place called Tishbi or Tishbeh, of which nothing is known. **Gilead.** The country on the east of the Jordan, a lofty table-land stretching to the Syrian desert, the home of

a rough, uncultivated people. It is noteworthy that the greatest prophets of the past, and the greatest preachers of the present, began life in the free air of the country. **Said unto Ahab.** For once the wicked king heard the voice of a man, and not of flattering courtiers. **As the Lord God of Israel liveth.** His mission was to proclaim Jehovah as against Baal, a living God against dead idols. **Before whom I stand.** He stood before God as his servant, and in an age of persecution made a bold confession. (2) *Why should any follower of the living God be ashamed to own his service? There shall not be dew nor rain.* Perhaps not absolutely none, for then the country would become a desert; but a drought sufficient to convince king and people that it came from the hand of God. Baal was the god of nature, and such a test would show his utter impotence. **But according to my word.** This would prove that he spoke by a divine authority. "How big doth he speak when he speaks in God's name." (3) *See in this the fidelity, courage, faith, and obedience of God's prophet.*

2. The word of the Lord. How it came we know not; perhaps by an inward impression which he recognized as divine. **Saying.** The object of the command was to protect him from the rage of Ahab, who would try to seize him, either to put him to death or to compel him to remove the curse from the land.

3. Turn thee eastward. From Samaria, where he had met the king. **Hide thyself.** (4) *There are times when God's servants must stand, and times when they may fly.* **The brook Cherith.** An unknown torrent running into the river Jordan from the mountain region. It was then supposed by some to be the *Wady Kelt*, near Jericho.

4. Thou shalt drink of the brook. Perhaps this brook would be kept running longer than others to supply his needs. **I have commanded the ravens.** Foul birds of prey were to be transformed in their nature and bring food to God's servant. Some would change the Hebrew *orebim* into *arabim*, "Arabians," and say that he was fed by wandering Arabs; but if we believe in miracles at all, why not accept the plain statement of Scripture? (5) *See how precisely God directs the ways of the servant who trusts him.*

5, 6. So he went and did. Reason would have urged a thousand arguments against obedience, but faith "went and did." **Dwelt by the brook.** A lonely place, but Elijah by the brook, alone with God, was happier than Ahab in his palace with a troubled conscience. (6) *There are times for patient waiting as well as for active working.* **The ravens brought him.** Each day came food for the day, but none for to-morrow. (7) *"From hand to mouth" is a comfortable way to live, if it be from the hand of God to the mouth of his child.*

7. After a while. The time is indefinite, but some have supposed it to have been about a year. **The brook dried up.** Imagine how Elijah's faith was tested as he saw the rivulet gradually lessening in volume. (8) *May it be ours to dwell by the river of life which never runs dry! Because there had been no rain.* So that the fact which on one hand tried his trust was on the other a proof of his prophetic inspiration.

8, 9. The word of the Lord. It came to him from above; it comes to us from the written word; and ours is the more sure word of prophecy. **Get thee to Zarephath.** An ancient city, midway between Tyre and Zidon, now called *Surafend*. **Belongeth to Zidon.** Zidon, on the sea-coast, was the very headquarters of Baal-worship, and the home of Jezebel. A strange command: "as if one flying from a lion was directed to seek refuge in a lion's den."—*Guthrie*. It was a journey through drought-smitten Israel, fraught with dangers, to a place more dangerous still. (9) *God's commands are not to be measured by worldly standards of expediency.* **Dwell there.** See how right under Baal's shadow God was raising up and preserving Baal's destroyer! (10) *God loves to show how impotent are human plots against his will.* **A widow woman.** The

condition of widows in the East is helpless in the extreme; so that to receive support from such a source was another trial to Elijah's faith. But then, Ahab would never search for the prophet in such quarters. **To sustain thee.** Yet in so doing she was herself sustained and blessed. (11) *They who contribute to God's cause receive more than they give.*

10. He arose and went. Notice throughout Elijah's history the promptness with which he obeyed the commands of God's Spirit. **The gate of the city.** An old tradition locates the very spot of this meeting south of the city. **The widow woman was there.** An unpropitious prospect, not encouraging to the fleshly nature, a support from a starving widow! "It was like leaning his whole weight on a support as frail as a spider's web."—*Guthrie*. But Elijah knew that the thread of God's purpose, how frail soever it seems, is a cable that human strength can never break. **A little water.** He was thirsty from his journey; she was famished with hunger; they shall do each other good, those two.—*E. P. Hood*. Two atoms with omnipotence behind them are mightier than two kingdoms in Baal's name.

11. She was going. In her own need she was mindful of another's need, and was ready to help to the limit of her power. **A morsel of bread.** It was not a selfish request, but was made under divine direction, to show the widow's want and awaken her faith. Perhaps, also, Elijah was not quite sure whether she was the one to whom God had directed him, and spoke to her as a test.

12. As the Lord thy God liveth. Her answer showed that she knew Jehovah, the God of Israel, and recognized Elijah as a worshiper, if not already as a prophet. **I have not a cake.** The word indicates "a round cake, baked in the ashes." **A handful of meal.** The meal was probably of barley, the common food of the lower classes. **In a barrel.** Rather, "in a jar," a long vessel of clay, such as is still seen in the East. **A little oil.** Olive oil in those lands takes the place of butter and lard, and is universally used in cooking. **In a cruse.** Rather, "a bottle;" though the form of the vessel as used in the East varies greatly. **Gathering two sticks.** That is, "a few sticks, a handful." **Dress it.** In the East there is very little fuel used, and the cooking is exceedingly plain. **Eat it and die.** The prophet finds need instead of support; and must give before he can receive. Perhaps this was one lesson that he was to learn.

13. Elijah said. Elijah knew his God; he remembered Cherith and the ravens; he recalled the manna in the wilderness, and he spoke to strengthen her faith. **Fear not.** How often we find this little sentence of encouragement in the word! **Make me...first.** This was not from a selfish desire for his own preservation, for he who had been fed by the ravens knew that God could and would care for him. He spoke by inspiration, to test and to strengthen the widow's faith. **Thy son.** There is an ancient tradition that this boy, brought back from death by the prophet's prayer, afterward became his servant, and was the prophet Jonah.

14. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. He was not sleeping, though he seemed to be; he was living, and at hand to verify the word of his messenger. **Meal shall not waste.** There was more than one lesson in this miracle; it showed the reward of faith, the care of God over his own, and it was a living picture of God's cause, slender and feeble, yet supported by divine power through the days of trial.

15, 16. She went and did. Her faith was as mighty as his, and nerved her to surrender her all at the summons of a stranger. Every line of her character as here drawn is fine and noble. (12) *May we be as ready to obey God's call, and give to his cause! Her house.* Possibly there were others in that household. **Eat many days.** It may have been two years, or even more. What a large reward for one act of faith! **Meal wasted not.** Matthew Henry remarks; "The meal and the oil multiplied, not in the hoarding, but in the spending."

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Elijah the Tishbite. 1 Kings 17. 1-16.
Tu. The miracle of Elisha. 1 Kings 17. 17-24.
W. The prayer of faith. James 5. 13-20.
Th. Christ's words about Elijah. Luke 4. 16-31.
F. The godly secure. Ps. 91. 1-16.
S. Obedience of Abram. Gen. 12. 1-9.
S. Promises to the obedient. Isa. 1. 10-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.

So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord. 1 Kings 17. 5.

LESSON HYMN. C. M.

Hymnal, No. 667.

O for a faith that will not shrink,
 Though pressed by every foe,

That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe!

A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.

Lord, give us such a faith as this,
And then, whatever may come,
We'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home.

TIME.—B. C. 910-907.

PLACES.—1. Gilead, the land east of the Jordan;
2. Samaria, the capital of Israel; 3. The brook Cherith,
near Jericho; 4. Zarephath, a Phenician village near
Zidon.

RULERS.—Ahab, seventh King of Israel; Jehoshaphat,
fourth King of Judah; Ben-hadad II., King of Damascus
and Syria; Vulnirari II., King of Assyria.
Athens was a republic, and Rome not yet founded.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—God's care over his people.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. Before the King, v. 1.**
From what part of the country did Elijah come?
What did he say to Ahab?
Why was the drought predicted?
When was it to end?
- 2. By the Brook, v. 2-7.**
What did God say to the prophet?
Where did he go?
How did he obtain food and drink?
- 3. In the City, v. 8-16.**
What occurred when the brook dried up?
Where did God command him to go?
How was he to be sustained there?
What did he say to the widow?
What was her reply?
What was his request and promise?
How did she show her faith?
What miracle sustained them all in the famine?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That wickedness is the cause of calamity?
2. That God provides for his children?
3. That faith receives reward?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. Before the King, v. 1.**
What visitor had Ahab?
Where did this prophet live?
What message did he bring?
- 2. By the Brook, v. 2-7.**
Where was the prophet directed to go?
Where was he to hide himself?
What did Elijah do?
How was he fed?
What caused the brook to dry up?
- 3. In the City, v. 8-16.**
To what city was he next directed?
By what other name was it called? Luke 4. 26.
Whom did he find at Zarephath?
What request did the prophet make?
What favor did he ask?
What was the widow's reply?
What did Elijah urge?
What promise did he make?
In whose name?
What followed the woman's obedience?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we see—

1. God's providing care?
2. Faith in God tested?
3. Faith in God rewarded?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What is the first we know of the prophet Elijah?
He appeared to Ahab with a message from God.
What was the message? **As sure as the Lord God of Israel lives, there shall not be dew nor rain until I call for it.**
Why did God send such a message? **He wanted to bring them from their great wickedness back to him.**

Where did God bid Elijah go as soon as he had spoken? **To the brook Cherith, by the river Jordan.** [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

How did he live there? **The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and evening, and he drank of the brook.**

Where did God send him after the brook dried up? **To a village named Zarephath, far to the north.**

At the gate of the city whom did he see? **A poor woman gathering sticks to make a fire.**

What did Elijah say to her? **"Will you please give me a cup of water, and a little piece of bread?"**

What did she answer? **"I've not a bit of bread, and only a handful of meal and a little oil."**

What was she going to do? **Make a little cake for herself and son, then die, because she had no more.**

Then what did the good prophet tell her? **"Fear not; make me a little cake first, and after that make one for thyself and son."**

What had the Lord said? **"The flour shall not waste, nor the oil fail, until the rain cometh."**

Did that poor woman have faith enough to obey? **She did; and for two years she, her son, and Elijah lived on the flour and meal, and it failed not.**

What happened to her boy while Elijah lived with her? **He died.**

What did God give Elijah power to do? **Raise him to life again.**

Words with Little People.

Perhaps some boy or girl who is studying this lesson will say, "If God would only *tell me* what to do as plain as he told Elijah 'all those things,' I would be glad to do it." This little letter I am writing to you now is *speaking* to you, although you cannot see my face or hear my voice, is it not? God as surely speaks to you in the blessed Bible. Every thing you ought to do you can find there, and, that you may understand it, he has given you your parents and teachers to explain it. So if you *really want to obey*, you can be as sure what he wants you to do as Elijah was. Will you change John 2. 5, by putting *me* in place of *you*, and *I will* after the *me*?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did Elijah tell Ahab there would be? **A drought.**
2. What did the Lord say to Elijah? **"Hide thyself by the brook Cherith."**
3. How was Elijah fed while there? **By ravens.**
4. Who fed Elijah at Zarephath? **A widow.**
5. What supported Elijah, the widow, and her son many days? **A handful of meal and a little oil.**

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....

Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Example of Elijah.

- I. AN EXAMPLE OF FIDELITY TO GOD.
The Lord God....before whom I stand. v. 1.
"Be thou faithful unto death." Rev. 2. 10.
"Be strong in the Lord." Eph. 6. 10.
- II. AN EXAMPLE OF BOLDNESS FOR GOD.
Said unto Ahab. v. 1.
"Be thou strong and very courageous." Josh. 1. 7.
"Cry aloud, spare not." Isa. 58. 1.
- III. AN EXAMPLE OF FAITH IN GOD'S WORD.
There shall not be dew nor rain. v. 1.
Thus saith the Lord. v. 14.
"Staggered not at the promise." Rom. 4. 20.
"Faith is....the evidence of things not seen." Heb. 11. 1.
- IV. AN EXAMPLE OF COMMUNION WITH GOD.
The word of the Lord came unto him. v. 2.
"Endured as seeing....invisible." Heb. 11. 27.
"Secret of the Lord....them that fear him." Psa. 25. 14.

V. AN EXAMPLE OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

Did according to the word. v. 5.

"By faith Abraham ... obeyed." Heb. 11. 8.

"Do whatsoever I command you." John 15. 14.

VI. AN EXAMPLE OF TRUST IN GOD'S CARE.

Dwelt by the brook Cherith. v. 5.

"Trust in the Lord and do good." Psa. 37. 3.

"The Lord preserveth the faithful." Psa. 31. 23.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Honors of God's Follower.

We see in Elijah a man who stood forth openly, avowedly, uncompromisingly, as a follower of God. He received for this great privileges, which we can have on the same terms.

1. There is the honor of insight into the divine purposes. He knew what others knew not, because, living in communion with God, the divine secret was with him. v. 1.

2. There is the honor of divine guidance. Every step was under God's direction, whether to Samaria, Cherith, or Zarephath. v. 2, 8, 14.

3. There is the honor of divine care. God's child is safe, for his Father's arm is around him. While others famish, he has food, even though birds may bring it. v. 6.

4. There is the honor of becoming a blessing to others. Not only is his own life preserved, but he becomes the means of preserving other lives. v. 13-16.

English Teacher's Notes.

I do not know whether cricket is as common a game in America as it is in England, but if not there is doubtless some other game which takes its place and which will serve as well in illustration. A cricket-field, to any one entirely ignorant of the game, presents a scene of curious confusion. Bats are raised and lowered, balls are pitched about, some are running as if for their lives, some standing on the alert as if watching for a foe, movements are begun and suddenly withdrawn again. A stranger might say: "Whatever are these boys about?" But if he inquires he will find they are acting according to rule—a strict, unbending rule—the law of the game. This accounts for their motions, slow, swift, sudden, or wary. This accounts for the place that each occupies, and the place to which each returns after some sudden departure. All is done according to rule. And not only play, but work also, requires to be done according to rule. Without some standard of reference even the common life of mankind would go on in a strange, haphazard way. Each place and nation has its rule or custom according to which the business, the pleasure, the life, goes on.

But there is a rule or measure laid down for us in the Golden Text which is meant for every place, nation, age, or rank, and which is equally suitable to all: "according to the word of the Lord." And as, in the passage for reading, these words occur twice over, so we get in the passage a twofold application of them.

First we see the word of the Lord as a rule. Here is a man who is ordering his conduct by it—Elijah the Tishbite. For years the word of the Lord has

been cast off by the rulers and by the nation as a whole. And, as the Lord's servant, Elijah has stepped boldly forth and announced the Lord's judgment upon the land. This very judgment threatens and endangers himself. How is he to be supported during the famine? And how is he to escape the wrath of the king? One would think the safest place for him was out of the country altogether. In Judah, surely, he might have found both the shelter and sustenance.

But instead of that, where does he go? First down to the lowly brookside on the farther bank of Jordan, to pass his days in solitary concealment. Later on to "Zarephath which belongeth to Zidon," actually into the country of Jezebel, the heathen queen of Israel, the slayer of the Lord's prophets. And not to some home of plenty, but to the dwelling of a poor widow, reduced as it seemed to her very last meal.

This appears strange conduct. What is the reason of it? It is no haphazard course. It is ordered by a strict principle. Elijah went and did "according to the word of the Lord," a rule altogether unpopular and out of fashion at the time.

If the matter were judged according to human calculations we should say that Elijah was in danger in both these places. A whole year, probably, he was on Israelitish ground, and another year he was in a heathen land, the country of his bitterest enemy. Quite within the reach of his foes, we should have concluded. And within the reach, also, of starvation, either in the lonely wilds near the Jordan or as a suppliant for food in a strange city.

But we have to look at the word of the Lord as a standard of reckoning. There had been commands given to others as well as to Elijah: "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee." "I have commanded a widow woman to sustain thee." Very incapable were both the ravens and the widow to perform the task of themselves, but in this matter they were the Lord's stewards, and were to draw from his resources. And they were not only incapable of themselves, but they were unconscious. When the hungry birds secured more than enough food to supply their own need in order that Elijah might be fed, they did not know whose word they were fulfilling. Nor did the widow know when she received the stranger who came to her door to what high honor she had been appointed. But God's word to Elijah could not be broken. "Go and hide thyself," said Jehovah to him, and he remained undiscovered by his enemies. "I have commanded," etc., again said the Lord, and day by day the bread and meat was brought to the brookside, and day by day the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil held out, sufficing for the wants of the prophet, of his hostess, and of her child, "according to the word of the Lord."

That standard of reckoning still holds good. The Lord's stewards, conscious or unconscious, still have orders to sustain every trusting servant who may be in need. "I have nothing wherewith to

procure my next meal, and no power to get any thing," such a one might say. "Then you'll starve," would be the correct answer according to human reckoning. But faith's answer runs thus: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." Deut. 8. 3.

But he that would enjoy the benefit of this standard of reckoning must first take it as his rule of life. Order your life "according to the word of the Lord," and according to that word you shall not lack any good thing. Psa. 34. 10; 84. 11. See what the psalmist thought of it: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." Psa. 119. 9. And he prays that according to that word he may be quickened, strengthened, comforted, visited by mercies (vers. 25, 28, 41, 77, 107, 154); and he is able gratefully and triumphantly to declare: "Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word." Ver. 65. If you walk by this rule men may think your conduct strange, because they do not understand its hidden law. No matter; you will have the full benefit of it as the standard of reckoning.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Elijah the Tishbite. 1 Kings 17. 1-16.

1. "So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord." The duty, wisdom, and beauty of obedience, ver. 5. Deut. 4. 35; 13. 4; 1 Sam. 15. 22; 2 Chron. 34. 30, 31; Isa. 42. 24; Jer. 7. 23; Acts 5. 29; 2 Cor. 10. 5; 1 Pet. 1. 1-14; Psa. 103. 20.

2. Elijah's character was sublimely courageous, faithful, determined, self-sacrificing, and zealous for God. 1 Kings 17. 1; 21. 19; 2 Kings 9. 36; 1. 3, 16; 1 Kings 18. 18; 1 Chron. 9. 54; 2 Chron. 21. 12-15; 1 Kings 19; Rom. 12. 2; 1 Kings 18. 15; 19. 10.

3. Elijah, with great boldness and suddenness, introduced himself to Ahab, and to mankind, in a prophetic salutation—an explanation of the point he made, ver. 1. Gen. 27. 28; Deut. 28. 22, 23; 33. 13, 28; Psa. 110. 3; 133. 3; Prov. 19. 12; 2 Sam. 1. 21; Jer. 14; Zech. 14. 17; James 5. 17.

4. A miracle is the will of God executed by him in an unusual way, that is all, ver. 6. Exod. 4. 6, 7; 17. 11-13; Matt. 8. 14, 15; 21. 19; John 3. 2; 7. 31; 21. 6; Acts 3. 12; 14. 3; 15. 12.

5. God does not exempt his own people from disciplinary severities in the present life, vers. 3, 7. Exod. 15. 23-25; Deut. 8. 2; Ezra 9. 13; Job 23. 10; Psa. 22. 4; 66. 10; Jer. 24. 5, 6; Lam. 3. 33; Rom. 5. 3; 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14.

6. Be reimpressed with the timeliness and munificence of God's promises, ver. 4. Gen. 3. 15; 9. 8, 9; 13. 14, 15; 26. 2-4; 28. 13; 2 Sam. 7. 11; Psa. 91; Exod. 23. 25; 1 Kings 8. 56; Jer. 39. 14; 2 Pet. 1. 4.

7. Other demands made by God upon human faith, ver. 13. Matt. 14. 29; 21. 19, 20; Mark 1. 15; 11. 23; John 14. 1; Acts 20. 21; 24. 14; 26. 27; 1 Tim. 1. 18, 19; Heb. 11. 13.

8. God's objects in departing from his usual order for what we call the "miraculous," v. 14. Deut. 11. 1-3; Isa. 29. 14; Exod. 4. 1-5; Matt. 11. 4-6; Mark 16. 20; John 5. 36; 7. 31; 11. 4; 20. 30; Heb. 2. 4.

9. We have our part to do before God will, or, better,

before God can, do his part. God dispenses his favors on conditions, ver. 15. Num. 21. 8, 9; Josh. 6. 6-20; 2 Kings 5. 10, 14; Mark 16. 16; Acts 2. 38; 3. 19; 11. 21; 18. 9, 10; 28. 5; 2 Thess. 2. 13.

10. We must give of our abundance, or of our penury, would we be personally enriched by God, vers. 15, 16. Lev. 25. 35; Deut. 16. 10, 17; Isa. 58. 7; 1 Cor. 13. 3; 16. 2; 2 Cor. 8. 9; 9. 7; Rom. 12. 13; Heb. 6. 10; 13. 16; James 2. 14-16.

Lessons:

1. Prosperity, wealth, power, are the natural, as well as gracious, fruits of righteousness.

2. A righteous people cannot long remain poor.

3. Conscientiousness should always be as bold in denunciation of sin as is consistent with wisdom, or tact, ver. 1.

4. Our work, let us not for a moment forget, is not to announce, as prophets, God's will, but, as evangelists, to labor for the salvation of redeemed sinners.

5. Men are able to know that it is God when they are addressed by him, ver. 2.

6. To-day God usually, but, possibly, not always, speaks to men in the Scriptures, ver. 2.

7. God's commands in his word are as explicit, and as severe, as when addressed to men directly, ver. 3.

8. God in "natural law" is as hard to explain as God in a miracle. Ultimate facts are without a philosophy, ver. 4.

9. It is God's commands we are to obey. We all know his commandments when we see them, they reveal their origin, ver. 3.

10. God afflicts sinners to punish them; he afflicts his own people to train them, ver. 7.

11. God can speak to man, ver. 8.

12. God has small as well as great purposes, ver. 9.

13. It is God under another name that changes the handful of seed into the harvest in the order of nature; why think it so strange that he should do the same thing with the handful of meal in the order of the miraculous? ver. 14.

14. We must use our powers would we have them multiply, ver. 15.

15. Constant and large expenditures, as God commands, is the wisest way of economizing and investing, ver. 16.

Berean Methods.

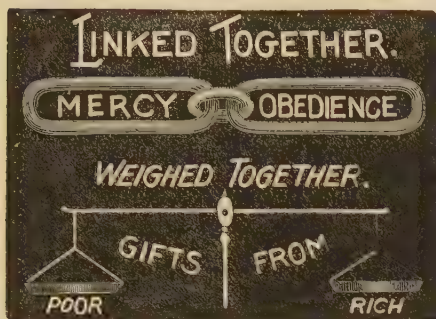
Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Begin with a picture of the times when Elijah appeared: Baal-worship, Ahab, Jezebel, Hiel (last lesson), persecution (1 Kings 18. 4), few worshippers of God, altars destroyed, etc.... Next the reformer, his coming, acts, traits of character, etc.... Draw a map, and trace Elijah's journeys: 1.) Gilead to Samaria, and the meeting with King Ahab. 2.) Samaria to Cherith, near Jericho, and the lessons of faith and God's care. "Cherith to Zarephath, and the meeting with the widow.... The two aspects of the lesson are the human and divine, one the traits of character shown by Elijah (see Analytical and Biblical Outline); the other, the privileges which he enjoyed as a follower of God (see Thoughts for Young People).... Another subject in the lesson is the widow of Zarephath, showing: 1.) Maternal love; 2.) Faith in God; 3.) Self-denial; 4.) Generous giving; 5.) The rewards which she enjoyed.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 10: Sticks for fuel, 307. Ver. 12: The "barrel," 308; The "cruse," 266; "Two sticks," 678. Ver. 13: Bread-making, 11.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. This is a double illustration, one being entirely separate from the other, but both are intended to be placed at once on the board. The first one illustrates the Golden Text, and shows that the mercy of God and the obedience of Elijah were linked together. If Elijah had disobeyed God, and had no faith, God's merciful plans on his behalf could not have been carried out. We should link our faith with divine mercy, and he that commanded the ravens to feed the prophet will take care of us. The second illustration touches on that part of the lesson where the poor widow gave to Elijah all the food she possessed. It was not much, but God weighs the gifts of the rich and the poor together, and the little of the needy one balances the greater gift of the rich.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Who is this before the king? Some sturdy man, alone, in simple prophet's garb, startling a wicked king by a message—a prophecy of drought—from the Lord God of Israel. Now flee, Elijah! There is a brazen sky overhead, but more cruel than any fiery heavens is the wrath of the king. Flee, flee! There is a brook to give thee drink and a cave to give thee shelter, but both are “before Jordan.” He reaches them. He drinks of the tinkling stream of crystal, he lies down in the cool gray shade of the cave. But food, where is that? It may be morning. He has risen and gone to the brook, but where is breakfast? O that empty, hungry land! Elijah may have said, “Where is God's promise?” See, though. There are birds flying up the valley. They wheel above the prophet's head, open their beaks, and drop his breakfast. He may make it last for dinner. But what of supper? Birds again, flying up the valley, their wings making a tuft of black cloud on the sunset-glory in the west. They fly above the prophet's head, open their beaks and drop—his supper. Each day the raven-carriers come. The sky though grows hotter and dryer, the brook runs slower and feebler and thinner, and at last there is no music in the brook-channel. Now flee again, Elijah! From the wilderness, go to the homes of men. But where? To Israel's cities? No, to Zarephath, a city of strangers. He is nearing the city's gate. One might well have said, “A prince will come out to feed Elijah.” Before the city-gate, a woman is hunting for sticks. Poor, starving soul, how feebly she moves! She bows and hunts, creeping about—but a stranger speaks! She looks up. “Water,” does he ask for? She will bring it, but turns to hear him ask for—“bread?” How can she give it? Only one “handful of meal in a barrel” has she, and “a little oil in a cruse,” and two mean

little sticks will cook this, and after those few mouthfuls there is nothing more. Starvation—death—next, for her and her child. The boy may be at the gate, with hungry, hollow eyes watching his mother. What does the stranger say? Feed him first, and God will not permit a waiting barrel and failing cruse? O faith that takes hold of God, makes its pitiful fire, cooks its scanty meal, gives to a stranger's hunger, and then looks into the barrel! Lo, it wastes not. And the cruse, it does not fail.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Blessings of Obedience.* This lesson abounds in material for word-pictures. They can only be effectively drawn by teachers who have prepared themselves by thorough study, so that they seem to see the scene they would reproduce. We can only make children see what we ourselves see clearly. This is true, not only in bringing mental pictures before the eye, but also in conveying spiritual truth to the heart.

THE OBEDIENT PROPHET.

Describe Elijah, God's servant—tall, strong, wearing a girdle of skin around his loins and a mantle of sheepskin, and with long hair falling upon his shoulders. Tell how he was sent to Ahab, the worst king Israel had ever known. He came out of the wilderness in his rough dress, and with strong, plain speech, warned Ahab of the judgments of God. He told him that no rain or dew should fall for these years. How did Elijah know? God had told him so. Elijah prayed for Israel, and God sent him to them with a message? Was God unkind to punish Israel? No, a good father punishes his child who does wrong. Was it easy for Elijah to go to Ahab? No, but he was willing to obey God, even if he had to do hard things. If we want to be God's children, we must be obedient, as Elijah was.

THE OBEDIENT RAVENS.



Who made the birds? Talk about them, their ways, how God feeds them, teaches them to build their houses, to find their way from one part of the country to another, etc. Tell that when the drought came upon the land of Israel the Lord told Elijah where to go and hide. He knew that Ahab would be angry with the prophet and try to kill him. He went to a wild place, away from men and their dwelling-places. How should the prophet be fed? God always provides for his obedient children. Tell how he sent the ravens to feed Elijah. Could not God as well teach the birds to do this as to build their houses? etc. Yes, our God is the God of the birds too.

THE OBEDIENT WOMAN.

Tell where the Lord told Elijah to go next. The woman to whom he was sent was a widow with an only son. Talk about the famine. The rain did not fall and nothing could grow; so the people were starving. Elijah asked for the last bit of food the poor woman had. Why did she give it to him? Because she believed in God, and she knew that Elijah was his prophet. Teach that she showed her faith in God by giving him the last food she had, and tell what blessing came to her through her faith and obedience.

Talk about obedient children. God speaks to children as well as to prophets. The child who obeys him

will be taken care of as certainly as Elijah and the poor woman were. God cared so much about Elijah's obedience, that he sent birds to feed him. He will provide for all our wants in some way. Let us obey him and follow him in all things.

LESSONS FOR AUGUST, 1885.

AUG. 2. Elijah Meeting Abah. 1 Kings 18. 1-18.
AUG. 9. The Prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18. 19-29.
AUG. 16. The Prophet of the Lord. 1 Kings 18. 30-46.
AUG. 23. Elijah at Horeb. 1 Kings 19. 1-18.
AUG. 30. The Story of Naboth. 1 Kings 21. 4-19.

The Report of the International Lesson Committee.

To the Sunday-School Workers of the United States and Canada.

CINCINNATI, O., April 17, 1885.

THE first meeting of the Third International Lesson Committee was held in this city on Wednesday and Thursday of the present week. All the members of the committee were present, except the Rev. Dr. Hoge, of Richmond, Virginia.

A great number of suggestions, petitions, and memorials, on a variety of subjects, were received.

All of them, except such as were anonymous, were most carefully considered and most conscientiously acted upon. They were then referred to a sub-committee, consisting of the Rev. Drs. John Hall, John A. Broadus, and John Potts, who were requested to embody in a compact form the views and conclusions brought out by the discussion. This sub-committee afterward presented the sub-joined report, which was adopted as the sense of the entire Lesson Committee:

"Having been appointed as a sub-committee to report upon communications addressed to the International Sunday-school Lesson Committee, we beg to offer the following statement:

"The memorials and other communications addressed to the committee, through its officers or members, were submitted and carefully read by the body. Many contained strong expressions of approbation of the lessons selected, and acknowledgments of the good effected, through the blessing of God, were gratefully noted. It is hardly needful to say that there was not unanimity in the recommendations thus conveyed. A large number of friends had signed petitions with a uniform call for Quarterly Temperance Lessons. These came from various sections of the country, and were prepared without any regard to denominations. Appreciating the earnestness with which the cause of temperance reform is being prosecuted, the committee, while including the Scripture references to the subject in their course, have arranged to suggest—for the year for which they have made their selection—lessons on *Temperance*, and on *Missions* (except for the last quarter), to be used where it is deemed best by the managers of schools in the room of, or in addition to, the quarterly review.

"Suggestions have been earnestly made to the committee on a variety of matters which had been most carefully discussed in the progress of arranging the previous courses. To some friends, for ex-

ample, short lessons seem desirable. They are so to those who have great facilities for preparation, and ample intellectual furniture; but, unhappily, large numbers are not so furnished, and then we are especially bound to consider. Many such teachers find all they have to say upon a short lesson exhausted while time yet remains. In like manner, modifications of our plan have been suggested, the carrying out of which would involve the appearance of settling matters about which the churches are not yet agreed, or would involve what we are precluded from entering upon by the constitution of the committee.

"The most careful consideration has been given to the earnest wishes of the friends who have thus communicated with us. Information was obtained not only concerning the condition of things in the great centers of intellectual activity, but also in less favored but wide regions, both east, west, and south. The proportion of lessons from the Old Testament has been deemed undue by some; but the weight of evidence before the committee was to the effect that great and wide-spread good had been the result of the revived and earnest study of the Old Testament portion of the canon.

"To some there is an appearance of abruptness in the transition from passage to passage; but this is rendered inevitable by the amount of Scripture over which the mind of the pupils has to be carried as intelligently as possible, and within the time to which the committee is confined by the instructions under which it acts. In a book so full of treasure as is the Divine Word, every pious heart finds that which to itself is inexpressibly dear; and that others should seem to fail to realize this preciousness appears unaccountable. The gentlemen placed on the committee, from different branches of God's one great Church, with widely differing environments, and all of them practically engaged in some form or other of Sunday-school work, have been unanimous in these decisions, and have done their utmost in view of all the objects committed to their hands to bring the topics and portions of the Word most fitted, on the whole, to the end in view into use; and they commit their work to the kindly forbearance of their fellow-laborers (for they well know that all cannot see alike in such matters), and to the good blessing of the Father of lights.

JOHN HALL, Chairman of Sub-Committee."

For the third term of seven years' study, the Lesson Committee agreed upon three years in the Old Testament, and four years in the New, with an alternation once in six months, save in a few exceptional cases. Lessons were selected for the first year only, it being understood that for subsequent years such modifications of detail may be made as circumstances may seem to require. The selections made for 1887 will be given to the public as soon as possible after our corresponding members in Great Britain and France shall have considered them and shall have informed us what modifications they may think desirable.

J. H. VINCENT, Chairman.

WARREN RANDOLPH, Secretary.

Book Notices.

Oats or Wild Oats? Common Sense for Young Men. By J. M. Buckley, LL.D. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Twenty-seven of the thirty-two chapters of this book appeared originally in "The Christian Advocate," of which the author is editor. They were widely read in that paper, and excited considerable attention, especially among the class for whom they were particularly designed. They are now published in more permanent form in answer to a large demand from various parts of the country. The author has added five chapters on topics he omitted to discuss in the letters as originally published. The themes treated in this volume are all of the greatest practical interest to young men, and the sensible, straightforward style in which the writer addresses the reader will be sure to win attention and lead to the best results.

The Tree of Methodism. By Victor A. Henry. Cincinnati, O.: Published by Author, 511 West Eighth Street. This is a chart designed to illustrate, by the figure of a tree, the rise and growth of Methodism, from the days of Wesley to the year 1884, the centennial year of the Methodist Episcopal Church. By a simple yet ingenious arrangement of the branches springing from one trunk, every Methodist organization that has appeared, either in Great Britain or in this country, is distinctly shown, with the date of organization, and the numbers in ministry and laity. It is a whole volume of history on one page.

Tales from Many Sources. Vol. I. New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co. These enterprising publishers intend issuing a series of volumes containing some of the best specimens of light literature that can be found. This is the first volume of the series. It contains 260 pages, is elegantly printed on excellent paper, and is neatly bound—a book pleasant to the eye, and light to the hand. It contains six excellent tales from as many different authors.

Home Studies in Nature. By Mary Treat. Illustrated. New York: Harper & Brothers. This book is redolent of the odors of forest, field, and garden. It takes its readers out-of-doors into fresh, pure air, and entertains them with most delightful descriptions of birds, insects, and flowers. Some of these are our every-day acquaintances, yet we learn unexpected facts concerning them; others are new and strange to us, in name, form, and habit. The only regret the reader has is that the writer laid down her pen so soon.

A City Violet. By M. E. Winchester. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. A story of low life in England with a little of high life thrown in, and showing that all, whether high or low, need to learn and to practice the one great law of love.

Great Heart; or, Sermons to Children. By William Wilberforce Newton. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. As the name suggests, this volume of sermons to children is founded on Bunyan's great allegory. The style is simple without being childish, and the book will make a profitable study to the increasing number of preachers who are trying to learn "how to talk to children." The children themselves will, of course, be profited by it.

Among the Stars; or, Wonderful Things in the Sky. By Agnes Giberne, author of "Sun, Moon, and Stars." New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. This is intended as an aid to children in the study of astronomy. It is written in an attractive style, and we think will be sure to captivate all of its young readers, and may interest some of the older ones.

Sermons by Bishop Matthew Simpson, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Edited from short-hand notes, by George R. Crooks, D.D. New York: Harper & Brothers. Here are twenty-five of the masterly discourses wherewith Bishop Simpson was wont to move and to profit his hearers. Those who never heard the famous preacher will form but a faint conception of his wondrous eloquence by the mere reading of these sermons, though they will doubtless find much in them to interest. But any one who ever had the rare privilege of listening to this prince of pulpit orators can easily, while reading, reproduce in imagination the speaker, as with kindled eye and glowing countenance he held his hearers spell-bound, or swayed them at his will.

My Sermon-Notes. A Selection from Outlines of Discourses delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, With Anecdotes and Illustrations. By C. H. Spurgeon. From Genesis to Proverbs. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. These "Notes," sixty-four in number, are interesting to all who wish to gain some insight into Spurgeon's modes of preparation for the pulpit. They are published by him as helps to lay preachers; but our advice to preachers of all sorts is, to let all such "helps" alone, and make your own notes. David could not fight in Saul's armor.

The Book of Esther. A New Translation, with Critical Notes, Excursuses, Maps, and Plans, and Illustrations. By the Lowell Hebrew Club. Edited by Rev. John W. Haley, M.A. Andover: Warren F. Draper. As may be inferred from the title-page, this is a composite work. It was prepared by a number of clergymen living in the city of Lowell, Mass., who met together at stated periods to study the Hebrew Scriptures. The present volume is one of the fruits of their labors. It is scholarly, and evidently prepared with great care.

Home Culture. A Self-Instructor and Aid to Social Hours at Home. New York: E. B. Treat. The plan of this work is novel. It consists of numerous test-questions and answers in geology, astronomy, history, geography, grammar, literature, fine arts, biography, philosophy, zoology, mineralogy, botany, chemistry, political economy, and various other subjects. It will give to many readers a vast fund of information, which they may turn to great profit.

Boots and Saddles; or, Life in Dakota with General Custer. By Elizabeth B. Custer. New York: Harper & Brothers. The memory of the brave young General Custer, of his heroism during our Civil War, and of his sad fate in the summer of 1876, is still fresh in the minds of many of our readers. His widow in this volume gives a very readable account of army life on the frontier. The close of the last chapter is very touching in its reference to her bereavement.

The Theology of Christ. From His own Words. By Joseph P. Thompson, D.D., LL.D. New York: E. B. Treat. To many of the present generation Dr. Thompson is known only by reputation, though there still remain those who have pleasant memories of his earnest preaching in the Broadway Tabernacle in the City of New York, and of his faithful pastoral work. Mr. Treat has done the public a service in placing before them this volume of Biblical Theology. Sunday-school teachers will be profited by carefully studying its pages.

Babyhood Magazine. New York. This is not for the babies, like "Babyland," published in Boston, but about them, since it is devoted exclusively to the care of infants and young children, and the general interests of the nursery. Its office is at 18 Spruce Street, New York.

MUSIC AND HYMNS FOR THE THIRD QUARTER.

* ENTIRE CONSECRATION.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

WM. J. KIRKPATRICK. By per.

1. Take my life, and let it be Con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee.

Take my hands and let them move At the im - pulse of thy love.

CHORUS.

1. { Wash me in the Sav - iour's pre - cious blood, (the pre - cious blood,) }
 { Cleave me in its pu - ri - ty - ing flood, (the heal - ing flood,) }

Lord, I give to thee my life and all, to be Thine, hence-forth e - ter - nal - ly.

2 Take my feet and let them be
 Swift and beautiful for thee.
 Take my voice, and let me sing
 Always, only for my king.—*Chorus.*

3 Take my lips and let them be
 Filled with messages from thee.
 Take my silver and my gold—
 Not a mite would I withhold.—*Chorus.*

4 Take my moments and my days,
 Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my intellect, and use
 Every power as thou shalt choose.—*Cho.*

5 Take my will and make it thine:
 It shall be no longer mine.
 Take my heart—it is thine own,
 It shall be thy royal throne.—*Chorus.*

6 Take my love—my Lord I pour
 At thy feet its treasure-store!
 Take myself, and I will be
 Ever, only, all for thee!—*Chorus.*

From the "ARK OF PRAISE," by permission.

MORE LIKE THEE.

Words and music by W. J. KIRKPATRICK. By per.

1. Je - sus, Sav - iour, great ex - am - ple, Pat - tern of all pu - ri - ty, I would

fol - low in thy foot - steps, Dai - ly grow - ing more like thee.

CHORUS.

More like thee, more like thee, Sav-iour, this my con-stant prayer shall
 More like thee, more like thee,
 be Day by day, where'er I stay, Make me more and more like thee.

Copyright 1876, by W. J. Kirkpatrick.

2 Lest I wander from thy pathway,
 Or my feet move wearily,
 Saviour, take my hand and lead me,
 Keep me steadfast: more like thee.—*Cho.*

3 When temptations fiercely lower,
 And my shrinking soul would flee,
 Change each weakness into power,
 Keep me spotless: more like thee.—*Cho.*

4 When around me all is darkness,
 And thy beauties none may see,
 May thy beams, O glorious brightness,
 In effulgence shine through me.—*Chorus.*

5 When death's cold, repulsive finger
 Leaves its impress on my brow,
 May thy life, within me swelling,
 Keep me singing then as now.—*Chorus.*

From "SONGS OF TRIUMPH."

GOD IS MY STRONG SALVATION.

AURELIA. 7, 6.

SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY.

1. God is my strong sal-va-tion; What foe have I to fear? In darkness and temp-ta-tion,

My light, my help, is near: Though hosts en-camp a-round me,

Firm in the fight I stand; What terror can confound me, With God at my right hand?

2 Place on the Lord reliance;
 My soul, with courage wait;
 His truth be thine affiance,
 When faint and desolate;

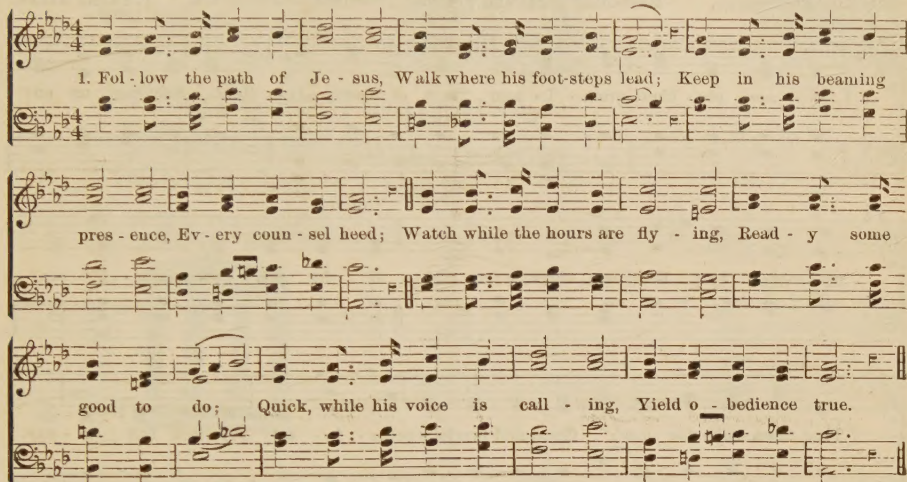
His might thy heart shall strengthen,
 His love thy joy increase;
 Mercy thy days shall lengthen;
 The Lord will give thee peace.

FOLLOW THE PATH OF JESUS.

DR. C. R. BLACKALL.

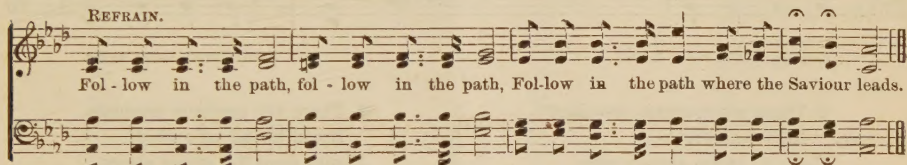
"He leadeth me in the paths."—Psa. 25. 10.

W. H. DOANE.



1. Fol - low the path of Je - sus, Walk where his foot-steps lead; Keep in his beaming
pres - ence, Ev - ery coun - sel heed; Watch while the hours are fly - ing, Read - y some
good to do; Quick, while his voice is call - ing, Yield o - bedience true.

REFRAIN.



Fol - low in the path, fol - low in the path, Fol - low in the path where the Saviour leads.

Copyright 1884, by BIGLOW & MAIN.

From "JOYFUL LAYS" by per.

2 Cling to the hand of Jesus,
All through the day and night;
Dark though the way and dreary,
He will guide you right;
Live for the good of others,
Helpless, oppressed with wrong;
Lift them from depths of sorrow;
In his strength be strong.—*Refrain.*

3 Work in the love of Jesus,
So shall your day be bright;
Go to the vineyard early,
Work from morn till night;
Bind up the broken-hearted;
See them on every side;
Whisper the name most precious,
Tell them Jesus died.—*Refrain.*

LABORING AND HEAVY LADEN.

STOCKWELL. 8, 7.

DARIUS ELIOT JONES.

1 Laboring and heavy laden,
Wanting help in time of need,
Fainting by the way from hunger,
"Bread of life!" on thee we feed.
2 Thirsting for the springs of waters
That, by love's eternal law,
From the stricken Rock are flowing,
"Well of life!" from thee we draw.

3 In the land of cloud and shadow,
Where no human eye can see,
Light to those who sit in darkness,
"Light of life!" we walk in thee.
4 Thou the grace of life supplying,
Thou the crown of life wilt give;
Dead to sin, and daily dying,
"Life of life!" in thee we live.

PRECIOUS PROMISES.

MRS. E. C. ELLSWORTH. "Exceeding great and precious promises."—2 Peter 1. 4. T. FRANK ALLEN.

1. There are pre-cious prom-i-ses, Rays of heav'n-ly light, Shin-ing on our

path-way here, Break-ing through the night. O the pre-cious prom-i-ses!

Take them while you may: Great and precious prom-i-ses, Free and full to-day.

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From "JOYFUL LAYS" by per.

2 There are precious promises,
Riches all divine,
Gems of rarest beauty seen,
Gold from deepest mine.—*Chorus.*

3 There are precious promises,
Bread for all who need,
Plenty from the stores above,
Starving souls to feed.—*Chorus.*

Whisper Songs for July.

FIRST LESSON.

Choose the right way ! choose the right way !
Jesus is calling you, hear and obey,
Enter his kingdom, he bids you come in,
Turn from the pathway of folly and sin.

SECOND LESSON.

Pray to the Lord ! pray to the Lord !
Worship him only, he says in his word ;
Dare not bow down to an idol to pray,
Give thy whole heart to the Saviour to-day.

THIRD LESSON.

Sin leads to death ! sin leads to death !
Turn from your sins, the All Holy One saith,
Turn unto me and your sins I'll forgive,
Turn unto me and your spirit shall live.

FOURTH LESSON.

Trust in thy God ! trust in thy God !
Scatter the seed of the kingdom abroad,
Give, and he'll give you, pressed down, running
o'er,
Riches of love in your heart evermore.

LESSONS FOR 1885.

Third Quarter.

- July 5. Revolt of the Ten Tribes... 1 Kings 12. 6-17.
12. Idolatry Established... 1 Kings 12. 25-33.
19. Onri and Ahab... 1 Kings 16. 23-34.
26. Elijah the Tishbite... 1 Kings 17. 1-15.
Aug. 2. ELLIJAH MEETING AHAB... 1 Kings 18. 1-18.
9. THE PROPHETS OF BAAL... 1 Kings 18. 19-29.
16. THE PROPHET OF THE LORD... 1 Kings 18. 30-46.
23. ELLIJAH AT HOREB... 1 Kings 19. 1-18.
30. THE STORY OF NABOTH... 1 Kings 21. 4-19.

- Sept. 6. ELLIJAH TRANSLATED... 2 Kings 2. 1-15.
13. THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON... 2 Kings 4. 18-37.
20. NAAMAN THE SYRIAN... 2 Kings 5. 1-16.
27. THIRD QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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